Hafa Adai!

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FOR PANDEMIC EXPENSE

FEMA OKs $22.1M in reimbursements

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Kilili says his office working with FEMA, Governor's Office to get $58M more owed CNMI for COVID-related expenses

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios announced yesterday that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved approximately $22.1 million in reimbursements for COVID-19-related expenses the CNMI incurred in its response to the pandemic, bringing to $36 million the total that the CNMI has received over the past 10 months of the Palacios-Apatang administration.

Palacios

Palacios noted that, in a report published by the U.S. Government Accountability Office last month, FEMA confirmed that it has $58 million pending reimbursements for the CNMI.

"FEMA's approval of the $22.1-million reimbursement could not have come at a more auspicious time, given many

See FEMA on Page 4

Chamber, HANMI join forces in advocating for CNMI exemption from China flight cap

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce and the Hotel Association of the NMI have now joined forces in advocating for a CNMI exemption to the U.S. Department of Transportation's China Part Order 213 which puts a cap on the number of scheduled flights from China to the entire United States.

See CHAMBER on Page 4

Kilili looks forward to updated Compacts of Free Association

Sablan

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) is looking forward with his colleagues in the U.S. Congress to the quick renewals and enactments of the Compacts of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs held a legislative hearing Thursday on a draft legislation

See KILILI on Page 4

LEIGH GASES

Yu Rong Jiang, third from left, poses with the perpetual trophy after she won the Senior Division of the 20th Annual Sengebau Poetry Competition at the American Memorial Park Visitor's Center last Friday night. She is joined by Northern Marianas Humanities Council executive director Leo Pangelinan, second left, and competition judges.

LEIGH GASES

Giana Lang, third from right, poses with the perpetual plaque after she won first place in the Junior Division of the 20th Annual Sengebau Poetry Competition at the American Memorial Park Visitor's Center last Friday night.

Jiang, Lang top Sengebau Poetry Competition

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Yu Rong Jiang and Giana Lang topped their respective divisions of the 20th Annual Sengebau Poetry Competition at the American Memorial Park Visitor's Center last Friday night.

Twenty middle and high school students took to the stage to recite Valentine N. Sengebau's poems and their own original poems.

Jiang from Saipan Southern High School won the Senior Division after reciting her original poem, "Reminders of Home." Second place was

See POETRY on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Vice chair Kiyeon Kwon of Seolhaeone Group, a principal shareholder of Saipan World Resort, went on a courtesy visit to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang.
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WORLD
Hamas on Friday freed an American woman and her teenage daughter who had been held hostage in Gaza.
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LIFE & STYLE
Will Smith joined Jada Pinkett Smith on stage as she promoted her new memoir in her Baltimore hometown Wednesday night.
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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

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Local

McManus: CUC now receiving $30M a year of EPA grants

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. used to get $7 million to $10 million in grants every year from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, but that number has now gone up to $30 million a year, according to EPA environmental engineer Hallie McManus.

In her presentation during the CUC board's special meeting last Thursday McManus said EPA has been awarding water and wastewater infrastructure grants to CUC for the past 20-plus years. Since 2008, it has already awarded CUC about $150 million.

» 'But there's a ton of work for engineering team'

That has recently tripled in the past two years with the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, said McManus, who also serves as the product officer for all the water and wastewater infrastructure grants that EPA awards CUC.

She said CUC is getting a huge grant increase in the next five years.

McManus said they just recently awarded their fiscal 2023 grant, which was about $27 million.

In addition, she said, they now have money for emerging contaminants on the clean water and drinking water side, as well as lead service line replacements.

McManus

The great thing about these grants, she said, is that CUC has the ability to use its discretion in what it chooses to fund with this money since CUC is eligible under the Omnibus Territories Act to consolidate its grants.

McManus said this is a "great opportunity" for CUC to make some much needed improvements on its water system, but this also comes with a lot of challenges, primarily the many projects facing CUC's engineering team.

She is glad that CUC has been able to hire four or five new engineers on staff, but a "ton" of more work lies ahead.

"It will be triple the amount of work that they have been doing. And we don't want them to be overwhelmed," she said.

She said they want everyone to stay and be happy and not stressed. "So, I'm really glad to see that you've been able to hire some new faces," McManus added.

DHS proposes to modernize and improve the H-1B program

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced Friday a notice of proposed rulemaking that would modernize and improve the regulations for the H-1B specialty occupation worker program.

Through this proposed rule, DHS seeks to streamline the requirements of the H-1B program, improve program efficiency, provide greater flexibility for petitioners and beneficiaries, and improve integrity measures.

Among additional provisions, the proposed rule would improve the H-1B program by:

■ **Streamlining eligibility requirements**—criteria for specialty occupation positions would be revised to ensure a direct relationship between the required degree field(s) and the duties of the position, recognizing there may be more than one acceptable degree field for a specialty occupation and a general degree is insufficient to qualify.

■ **Improving program efficiency**—DHS would clarify when an amended or new petition must be filed due to a change in an H-1B worker's place of employment consistent with current policy guidance. The proposed rule also codifies that adjudicators generally should defer to a prior determination when no underlying facts have changed at time of a new filing;

■ **Providing greater benefits and flexibilities for employers and workers**—certain exemptions to the H-1B cap would be expanded for certain nonprofit entities or governmental research organizations and beneficiaries who are not directly employed by a qualifying organization. DHS would also extend certain flexibilities for students on a F-1 visa when students are seeking to change their status to H-1B and establish new H-1B eligibility requirements for rising entrepreneurs; and

■ **Strengthening integrity measures**—the H-1B registration selection process would be improved to reduce the possibility of misuse and fraud, including by prohibiting related entities from submitting multiple registrations for the same beneficiary. The rule would also codify USCIS' authority to conduct site visits and clarify that refusal to comply with site visits may result in denial or revocation of the petition.

To submit comments

The NPRM allows for a 60-day public comment period that begins once the NPRM is published in the Federal Register. You may submit comments through Regulations.gov. Please follow the instructions for submitting comments. DHS may not review comments submitted in a manner other than the one listed in the instructions, including emails or letters sent to DHS or USCIS officials.

DHS welcomes public comments on the proposed rule, including legal and policy considerations, and suggestions for alternative approaches. We will review all properly submitted comments, consider them carefully, and draft responses before issuing a final rule. ***(PR)***

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$3M Settlement Fund, CUC settlement OK'd

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI has approved the over $3-million settlement agreement between the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the NMI Settlement Fund.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood approved last Friday the settlement agreement, with CUC agreeing to pay the NMI Settlement Fund $3,469,797 in the amount of $50,000 per month until the settlement balance is paid in full.

In addition, CUC's $50,000 monthly payments are subject to interest for late monthly payments at a rate of 5% per annum, calculated from the earliest unpaid monthly payment until such time the entire unpaid balance is paid.

"Having carefully reviewed the request and the settlement agreement reached in the Superior Court action and there being no objection, the court finds that the terms of the settlement agreement and settlement amount of $3,469,797 are fair, reasonable and adequate, and in the best interest of all settlement class members. Therefore, the court orders as follows: the settlement agreement is approved in all respects, and the parties shall perform its terms," said Tydingco-Gatewood.

The then-NMI Retirement Fund sued CUC last May 5, 2011, to collect unpaid employer contributions. The lawsuit alleged violations of the CNMI Constitution, breach of contract and void assignment of debt. It sought judgment in the amount of $3,175,225 plus $740,462 in penalties, and $527,716 in economic damages as of April 29, 2011.

In December 2011 the NMI Retirement Fund moved for partial summary judgment. CUC opposed and filed a cross-motion for partial summary judgment on Feb. 20, 2012.

On May 10, 2012, the CNMI government intervened and opposed the NMI Retirement Fund's motion for partial summary judgment.

On May 17, 2012, the lawsuit was moved to U.S. District Court for the NMI following the NMI Retirement Fund's petition for bankruptcy.

On Aug, 15, 2012, the bankruptcy was dismissed and the case was remanded to the CNMI Superior Court.

On Aug. 15, 2017, the NMI Settlement Fund was substituted as the plaintiff in the Superior Court lawsuit.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

KILILI

From page 1

that would approve the recently negotiated and updated Compacts of Free Association.

Committee on Natural Resources chair Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-Ark) introduced the draft House joint resolution.

In his *e-kilili* newsletter over the weekend, Sablan commended Ambassador Joseph Y. Yun, who is the special presidential envoy for Compact negotiations, for his team's successful negotiations with FSM, Palau, and Marshall Islands., which are all U.S. Pacific allies.

Yun and Carmen Cantor, who is the Office of Insular Affairs assistant secretary, were the witnesses at the legislative hearing.

Sablan said these agreements are a matter of defense, security, and economic opportunity for both the U.S. and the Freely Associated States.

Sablan said this draft legislation approves the Compact agreements that total $7.1 billion in mandatory funding over the next 20 years.

He said the draft legislation provides $6.5 billion in economic assistance to the Freely Associated States and $634 million for continued U.S. Postal Service services.

"Now that the agreements are nearly complete, it is Congress' turn to act," the delegate saiThe Compact Agreements refer to the treatises the U.S. signed with the Freely Associated States, which grants the U.S. certain privileges and access to these countries, in exchange for defense arrangements, among other benefits.

CHAMBER

From page 1

The Chamber and HANMI have now banded together in support of a CNMI exemption to US DOT's China Part Order 213 which essentially caps the number of scheduled flights from China to the entire United States to 24 each month.

As their first order of business after joining forces, HANMI and the Chamber sent out letters addressed to government leaders including Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP), Senate President Edith Deleon Guerrero (D-Saipan) and members of the Senate, and House Speaker Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) and members of the House, asking them to collaborate with the private sector and consider some of their recommendations pertaining to issues revolving the China market.

Some of the recommendations proposed by the Chamber and HANMI were working to bring back the China market, improve processing of Chinese visitors, amending the approved countries eligible for CW-1 permits, and more.

"There are significant and urgent needs present in our community, and the means by which to address them collaboratively. Expanding the potential revenue for all and not just the piecing out of ever smaller portions of a shrinking source of revenue is possible through collaboration, improvements to the way in which our government and economy operate, and in balancing diverse needs to uplift the greatest number of people. We understand the complexities of geopolitics and the myriad of considerations when crafting policy. However, the CNMI stands at a pivotal juncture, and the decisions made today will echo for generations. We are not merely seeking economic growth; we are striving to preserve our way of life, our culture, and our shared American values. We humbly urge you to consider our recommendations, keeping in mind the broader tapestry of U.S. interests, regional dynamics, and the very real, immediate needs of the CNMI's residents," said the letter.

Ultimately, HANMI and the Chamber's goal in this joint endeavor is to address critical matters that both the business community and the government face today.

"This collective endeavor is a testament to our commitment to fostering a more robust and prosperous economic environment on Saipan. The Chamber along with HANMI are dedicated to working alongside these influential leaders to champion the interests and aspiration of our local businesses," said the letter.

FEMA

From page 1

of the financial challenges the CNMI is facing and the critical expenses we need to address to maintain essential government programs and services," said the governor in a statement.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) also disclosed in his *e-kilili* newsletter over the weekend that the Commonwealth received two more reimbursements for COVID-related expenses on Thursday, totaling $21,433,668.

Palacios said that upon assuming office earlier this year, he and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang emphasized that expediting these FEMA reimbursements would be a key priority.

He thanked the team at the CNMI Public Assistance Office for its focus on this effort and expressed his gratitude to Sablan for the role he and his office played in facilitating the reimbursements. In particular, Palacios said, Sablan's office has been advocating for expediting FEMA's review and award process.

"Congressman Kilili [Sablan] and his team worked tirelessly to facilitate these reimbursements and to help coordinate communication between the CNMI and FEMA," he said.

Palacios said his office is continuing to work with Sablan to expedite the approval of the pending $58 million in reimbursement requests.

The reimbursement package, approved under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, includes $12 million in payments made by the CNMI for activities to support the administration of testing and vaccination at multiple locations on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Palacios said the reimbursement covers the administration of 98,159 diagnostic COVID-19 tests to high-risk individuals, students and staff, healthcare workers, emergency response personnel, critical infrastructure personnel, and all other community members (general public), as well as medical support, equipment, and the distribution of supplies and disinfection services at the testing and vaccination sites.

He said the reimbursements also include $9.4 million that was paid to maintain and operate the former Mariana Resort & Spa quarantine site for residents and visitors.

From July 2021 to July 2022, the CNMI reportedly sheltered 5,749 individuals at Mariana Resort for an average five-day length of stay.

Palacios said these costs included services that include meals, cleaning, laundry services, room disinfection, trash disposal, and other things.

Early this month, the CNMI also received close to $700,000 for other quarantine sites on Tinian and Rota when they experienced a surge of infections.

Sablan said the $21.4 million reimburses the Commonwealth for the costs of maintaining a quarantine site for returning residents and visitors at the Mariana Resort during the pandemic.

Sablan said some 5,749 individuals were housed at the Mariana Resort at an average cost of $1,647 for the typical five-day period of isolation.

He said this week's reimbursements also cover the costs to set up testing and vaccination centers at Kanoa Resort, the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center, Rota Health Center, and Tinian Health Center.

The delegate said over 98,000 diagnostic tests (at a cost of $16.08 each) were administered there to high-risk individuals and the public between July 2021 and July 2022.

He said the Commonwealth also paid for emergency medical transport for COVID-19 patients, medical equipment and supplies, and personal protective equipment, which FEMA has now reimbursed 100%.

As of Oct. 19, 2023, a total of $104.6 million in FEMA grants for COVID-19 have been awarded to the CNMI.

Zheng resigns as IPI manager/director

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Dongting Zheng has resigned as manager/director of the Saipan casino licensee, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC.

How-Yo Chi has been appointed as the new manager/director of IPI, according to a document received by the CNMI Department of Commerce last Oct. 13, a copy of which was obtained by *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

Zheng said the authorization for Chi to serve as manager/director shall be in effect until otherwise terminated by the board of directors of Imperial Pacific Holdings Limited.

Zheng's resignation and Chi's appointment is on the agenda of the CCC board's regular monthly meeting this Thursday.

In April 2020, then-Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Edward C. DeLeon Guerrero stated that he wanted to know the veracity of a document indicating that Zheng has been designated as the sole IPI board director.

POETRY

From page 1

Kagman High School's Fanai Staffler with her poem "Can You Weave?" and third place was Dr. Rita H. Inos High School's duo of Ashley Cayabyab and Sayera Sidur with their poem "The Pacific's Lush Paradise."

Jiang, who is a freshman, shared that the inspiration for her original poem was about growing up in the CNMI since 2013 as an immigrant from China.

"I was thinking about what or how this island makes me feel like I belong here. Obviously, I'm not a Pacific Islander… So, as I was growing up, I actually came into contact with more Pacific Islanders than my own people. This whole poem is actually inspired by my childhood process—my growth. Like what I said in my poem—the food, they're local here and I barely mentioned mine because I'm in Micronesia. I adapted and adopted this culture," Jiang said of her poem's inspiration.

Jiang also won the Junior Division in last year's competition after reciting Sengebau's poem, "Searching."

Lang, from DanDan Middle School, topped the Junior Division with the poem "Ngedeloch."

There was a bit of a mix up with winners—as originally, Lang was said to be second place instead of first place, but it was cleared up later. Second place went to DMS' Mary Audrey Bansil with the poem "Ngak" and third place was Francisco M. Sablan Middle School's Kalie Ann Kalen with the poem "Mirage."

On how she felt about the mix up, 13-year-old Lang thought she didn't win at all. She said, "I was really happy when they said that I won second and when they said they had made a mistake, I had a moment of like 'oh no, maybe I didn't win anything at all,' but then they called me as first place, and I was really surprised, happy, and grateful."

She then thanked her coaches Simon Necesito and Deana Villagomez.

First place winners received $300, second place received $200, and third place won $150.

The competition is an annual event hosted by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council. Executive director Leo Pangelinan said of the performers after the event, "Jiang was first place in the junior division last year, and now she came in with an original poetry. I mean, that's just what we want to have, really, with our middle school students is they build up that courage and they explore their own authentic voice through poetry. That's an example of someone doing that, so we're really happy about that."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

Fukuoka University appoints NMC's Sarker as visiting professor

Fukuoka University of Japan has bestowed the title of visiting professor to Dr. Zaidul Sarker, professor and CNMI Food Science program leader of Northern Marianas College's Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services.

Sarker's appointment as visiting professor is part of the Sakura Science Exchange Program administered by the Japan Science and Technology Agency. The program aims to promote scientific and technological exchanges between Japan and other countries, and to foster the next generation of global leaders.

"This is an excellent program to build collaborations among international colleagues," Sarker said. "It is also a great platform to build relationships with the students and learn about Japanese culture. I visited various laboratories at Fukuoka University and took a facility tour of Kitakyushu Eco Town, as well as the West treatment and water treatment plants in Fukuoka, which were all very interesting."

During his time as visiting professor, Sarker will establish research collaborations between NMC and Fukuoka University, and will work to develop a talented workforce for the U.S. Department of Agriculture from the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands in the areas of food science and agriculture, and related science, engineering, and technology. He will also give talks to scientists and researchers on zero waste lifestyle, traditional food and nutraceuticals, and ag-related culture.

Sarker has gathered experiences that will help to install the latest ultrasound and enzyme assisted equipment to extract the food and nutraceuticals using these green technology without any organic solvent in the upcoming Food Science laboratory at NMC-CREES.

"Congratulations to Dr. Sarker on this prestigious appointment. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Fukuoka University to enhance Food Science in our islands and region," interim dean of NMC-CREES Patty Coleman said.

Sarker will have the opportunity to bring students from the CNMI to Fukuoka University of Japan for a 10-day experiential learning trip in the first two weeks of December 2023 under the NEXT-GEN Program. The purpose of the trip is to provide students with workforce development opportunities in the areas of food science, agriculture, and related science, engineering, and technology for the USDA.

Students will also have the opportunity to talk with scientists and researchers about zero waste lifestyles, traditional food and herbal medicine, and nutraceuticals. They will also experience ag-related culture. ***(NMC)***

NMC

CNMI Food Science program leader and professor Dr. Zaidul Sarker of Northern Marianas College's Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services, left, and Fukuoka University president Keijiro Saku.

GMS congratulates winners of PGFC last Oct. 7

Green Meadow School congratulated the following students for their success at the Primary Grade Forensic Competition held last Oct. 7.

K5 Division

- Gora, Darlene Beatrix S. 4th place Humorous Interpretation
- Guevarra, Jhaymie Rose L. 5th place Humorous Interpretation
- Rena, Irish Juliana D. 2nd place Humorous Interpretation
- Mangarero, Harlan Jett S. 3rd place Humorous Interpretation

1st and 2nd grade Division

- Dela Cruz, Faith Chloe M. 2nd place Reader's Forum
- Lopez, Rodolf Jr. 3rd place Reader's Forum
- Salamat, Elliana Marie G. 1st place Reader's Forum
- Naluz, Luke Estevan 3rd place Reader's Forum
- Zapanta, Rhayven A 2 nd place Reader's Forum
- Dalusong, Aizen Jay L. 4th place Reader's Forum
- Buston, Arianne Therese S. 2nd place Reader's Forum
- Dayrit, Katrina Zoe 3rd place Reader's Forum
- Dizon, Abrianna C. 2nd place Reader's Forum
- De Vero, Romeo Leon P. 4th place Reader's Forum
- Gabule, Ariel Faith 5th place Reader's Forum
- Aldan, Kelsey Rey K. 1st place Chamorro Speaking
- Salamat, Elliana Marie G. 2nd place Duo
- Narciso, Annhea Joyce B. 2nd place Duo
- Dela Cruz, Faith Chloe 3rd place Duo
- Jebehn, Avaline Jeney 3rd place Duo
- Dayrit, Katrina Zoe 5th place Duo
- Dalida, D'andre G 5th place Duo
- Buston, Liam Roy S. 1st place Choral Speaking
- Koshiro, Bentley R. 1st place Choral Speaking
- George, Kira 1st place Choral Speaking
- Lilles, Colin James B. 1 st place Choral Speaking
- Lartey, Naa Kowah 3rd place Choral Speaking
- Relata, Emily Arden 3rd place Choral Speaking
- Chutin, Maria Margaux 3rd place Choral Speaking
- Dizon, Abrianna Dizon 3rd place Choral Speaking
- Gabule, Ariel Faith 3rd place Choral Speaking
- Celis, April Joanne S. 4th place Choral Speaking
- Gora, Darlene Beatrix S. 4th place Choral Speaking
- Mangarero, Harlan Jett S. 4th place Choral Speaking
- Rena, Irish Juliana D. 4th place Choral Speaking
- Zinampan, Elijah Reid D. 4th place Choral Speaking
- Formanes, Isaiah Leiann S. 5th place Choral Speaking
- Lopez, Princess Chloe DL 5th place Choral Speaking
- Cabrera, Sansone Nikolai 5th place Choral Speaking
- Reyes, Nathan Angelo P. 5th place Choral Speaking
- Quindoza, Jaira Hope S. 5th place Choral Speaking

3-5 Division

- Mabaquiao, Jarl Marcin L. 2nd place Declamation
- Quindoza, Jade Haven S. 1st place Dramatic Interpretation
- Pangelinan, Autumn D'Ann DLG 2nd place Dramatic Interpretation
- Nabetinan, Chrismarie 4th place Dramatic Interpretation
- Roquelara, Rayne Angela R. 1st place Dramatic Interpretation
- Escano, Emmjie E. 3rd place Dramatic Interpretation
- Santos, Albert Miguel U. 1st place Humorous Interpretation
- Daca, John Rey DL 2nd place Humorous Interpretation
- Salamat, Lanz Carmelo G. 3rd place Humorous Interpretation
- Escarcha, Ian Noel L. 4th place Humorous Interpretation
- Duenas, Christopher Leyland G. 5th place Humorous Interpretation
- Agdoro, Angelee SG 1st place Impromptu
- Balboa, Jadean Bryana O (4 th) 1 st place Reader's Forum
- Malasaga, Anna Marie I. 5th place Reader's Forum
- Pastula, Bella Mariam 5th place Reader's Forum
- Leuma, Joseph Paul Jr. 4th place Reader's Forum
- Marzo, Jeron Carl M. 3rd place Reader's Forum
- Sarabia, Johana Elizabeth L. 5th place Reader's Forum
- Mendoza, Paul James A. 4th place Reader's Forum
- Kisa, James A. 4th place Chamorro Reading
- Mendoza, Paul James A. 1 st place Duo
- Aguon, John Raphael Q. 1st place Duo
- Leuma, Joseph Paul Jr. 4th place Duo
- Sansi, Elijah Mosiah 4th place Duo
- Pulido, Jayden Rei A. 5th place Duo
- Kisa, James A. 5th place Duo
- Daca, John Rey DL 2nd place Duo
- Espiritu, Geri Liam Angelo 2nd place Duo
- Armia, Edrich Jewel 3rd place Duo
- Escano, Emmjie E. 3rd place Duo
- Marzo, Jeron Carl M. 2nd place Choral Speaking
- Palacios, Jadynn T. 2nd place Choral Speaking
- Duenas, Christopher Leyland G. 2nd place Choral Speaking
- Ortiz, Juliana Kai G. 2nd place Choral Speaking
- Delos Reyes, Kiani Jayde I. 2nd place Choral Speaking
- Espiritu, Geri Liam Angelo 1st place Choral Speaking
- Mabaquiao, Jarl Marcin L. 1st place Choral Speaking
- Salamat, Lanz Angelo G. 1st place Choral Speaking
- Santos, Albert Miguel U. 1st place Choral Speaking
- Agdoro, Angelee SG 3rd place Choral Speaking
- Monkeya, Paige Melanee F. 3rd place Choral Speaking
- Sansi, Rihanna 3rd place Choral Speaking
- Nekaifez, Davizin Carmen Zareena C. 3rd place Choral Speaking

For more information about Green Meadow School and their various programs, visit their website or contact their office at 670-235-2185. ***(PR)***

BAM Trading Services, Inc.
NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that BAM Trading Services, Inc. (the "**Company**"), a foreign company, is applying for a Certificate of Withdrawal from the CNMI Registrar of Corporations.

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Manta Ray Battalion takes part in DVAM Walk

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Battalion poses for a group photo after taking part in the Purple Wave, Walk, and Roll event held last Thursday in San Vicente.

By C/2LT KIANA PANGELINAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

The Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Battalion showed support to survivors and victims of domestic violence by taking part in the Purple Wave, Walk, and Roll event last Thursday.

The Manta Ray cadets joined the Marianas High School Dolphin Battalion and Kagman High School Ayuyu Battalion in a roadside waving before starting the mile-long walk around San Vicente in commemorating October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The Manta Ray Battalion led the way for the other JROTC battalions and event volunteers while reciting cadences loud and proud. Once the march was finished the cadets were provided with fruits and water.

"We got to march alongside the other schools while showing support to the victims of domestic violence and contribute back to our community," said C/SSG David Xing.

C/SSG Niana Mad said she really enjoyed the DVAM Walk.

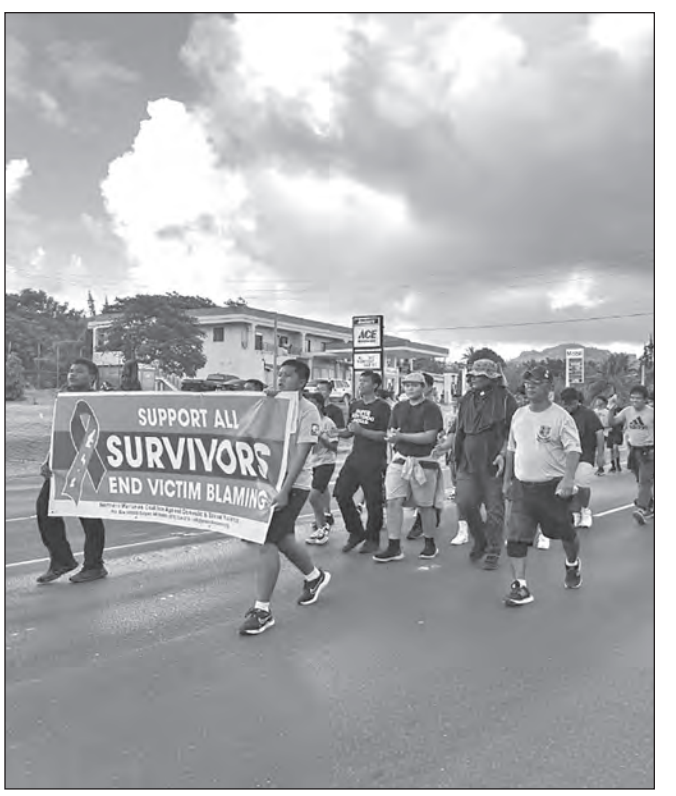
"I was super happy we were able to participate in it. In my opinion, our presence that day gave us time to reflect on things that go on around the world. As a teenager of this generation, when I experience these event I start thinking about it and realize I have a voice that I can use to talk about these problems we are having and see that I and anyone else can make a difference."

C/2LT Ashley Villagomez echoed what Mad said. "Thought it was very cool to be able to walk around San Vicente and spread awareness about domestic violence."

The Manta Ray Battalion is glad to have participated in this year's Purple Wave, Walk, and Roll event as well as to be able to showcase its support and spread awareness throughout the community on the matter of domestic violence.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Manta Ray Battalion is glad to have participated in this year's Purple Wave, Walk, and Roll event around San Vicente.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Manta Ray cadets join the Marianas High School Dolphin Battalion and Kagman High School Ayuyu Battalion in a mile-long walk around San Vicente in commemorating October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) NMHC IFB 2024-001

(This ad is paid by NMHC by HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: November 08, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM (PSS) TINIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REHABILITATION PROJECT- PHASE II

Project Package will be available on October 09, 2023, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Field Office in Tinian located at the NMC Campus in Tinian on October 20, 2023, 10:00 a.m. In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

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INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) NMHC IFB 2024-002

(This ad is paid for NMHC with HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME: November 13, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

200-foot Communication Tower for the Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) Project at Mt. Tapochau, Saipan

Project Package will be available on October 13, 2023, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan on **October 24, 2023, 10:00 a.m.** In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

/s/ Merced "Marcie" M. Tomokane
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
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Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE OF INVITATION FOR BID ADVERTISING CONCESSION AT THE FRANCISCO MANGLONA BORJA/TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Project No.: CPA-IFB-005-23
CPA Concession No.: TAD-2023-01-02

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed bids, subject to the terms and conditions of the Invitation for Bid (the "IFB"), and other contract provisions, for bids from firms, companies, and/or corporations for Advertising Opportunities at the Francisco Manglona Borja/Tinian International Airport.

The IFB will be issued and available for pick-up beginning September 27, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, at the Administration Office, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport or at the CPA Office located at the Francisco Manglona Borja/ Tinian International Airport. CPA offices are closed every other Monday beginning Monday, October 2, 2023 for austerity reasons and also on holidays. The IFB includes layouts of the advertisement area and other requirements. All responses to this IFB shall also take into account any and/or all costs that will be charged to the bidder awarded the contract for the project. Prospective bidders will be required to pay an administrative fee of $100.00 for costs associated with handling and consideration of the bid.

Questions and/or clarification concerning this project shall be in writing and sent to the attention of the Tinian Port Manager, Antonio L. Borja through email at alborja@cnmiports.com with copy to Joy Ann Tenorio at joy.tenorio@cnmiports.com no later than October 11, 2023.

All bids shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "INVITATION FOR BID SUBMISSION: CONFIDENTIAL, ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY CPA-IFB-005-23." One (1) original and two (2) copies of the bid must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time, October 31, 2023, to the Authority Administration Section, Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport.

Bids will be opened on October 31, 2023, at 3:00p.m. at the Commonwealth Ports Authority Meeting Room, Saipan International Airport. Bids are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee. The concessions are for the right to advertise at certain designated locations within the Francisco Manglona Borja/Tinian International Airport for a period of two (2) years and requires the concessionaire to operate such concession to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so, would be in CPA's best interest. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All bids shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

9/25/2023
Date

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

INVITATION FOR BID

PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-004-24
SUBMISSION DATE: NOVEMBER 24, 2023: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF ONE UNIT BRAND NEW SUV FOR CPA SAIPAN SEAPORT OFFICE"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP AT THE COMMONWONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) ACCOUNTING OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEGINNING OCTOBER 23, 2023. AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100.00 SHALL BE PAID TO CPA BEFORE A BIDDER MAY OBTAIN THE BID PACKAGE. PAYMENTS SHALL BE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, OR CREDIT CARD.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ONE (1) UNIT BRAND NEW SUV FOR CPA SAIPAN SEAPORT OFFICE **(IFB-004-24)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., NOVEMBER 24, 2023. **A 10% BID GUARANTY IN THE FORM OF A BID BOND OR CASHIER'S CHECK SHALL BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID DOCUMENTS.** BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

WENDI PRATER
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: _____

IN LIGHT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Finding Light: A performance of hope, love, and bravery

Saipan Dance Studio will be organizing and hosting a formal performance at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center called "Finding Light" on Saturday, Oct. 28, from 6pm to 8pm, to highlight this month's Domestic Violence Awareness message and cause.

Further, the event aims to further promote love, hope, and bravery in the island community through the art of performance and collaboration, with the non-profit organization Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence as Saipan Studio's chosen beneficiary.

"With the Multi-Purpose Center venue capacity of 300 seats, we call out the community's support and attendance to fill each seat this coming Saturday evening for this important charitable event and significant performance," the studio said in a news release.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence Organization Team. Contact NMCADSV at (670) 234-3878 or email info@EndViolenceNMI.org for more information or to get assistance.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The event is in collaboration with non-profit organization Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence.

The dance concert will also be showcasing Saipan Dance Studio's students, whose ages range from as young as 4 years old to 16-years-old teens.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Dance Studio's "Finding Light event will be held this Saturday, Oct. 28, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

The stage will also be graced by a key speaker representing the NMCADSV and will have a special finale performance by Jasmine Johanson and Linz Wang, the owners and instructors of Saipan Dance Studio, who have a combined 20 years of professional and performing arts experience across three continents.

Johanson is a professional ballet dancer with degrees in Education and Dance and over 10 years of teaching experience in China and the United States, with a more recent professional tour and competition in Germany this past summer.

Wang has been dancing and teaching in Europe and the United States for the last seven years and continues her professional work there from Saipan.

In line with Saipan Dance Studio's mission to impart the art of dance and fitness to its students, the studio also teaches them essential life skills such as focus, teamwork, discipline, work ethic, and the importance of reaping rewards through dedication. "That includes building upon foundational skills aimed to transcend beyond studio walls to find its way into our students' homes and family life and into the classrooms of our local schools, cultivating stronger, more well-rounded students and community members," the news release added.

This Saturday's event is also organized as a charitable endeavor, with 25% of ticket sales and monetary donations received earmarked for the NMCADSV, which is led by executive director Maisie B. Tenorio, its board members, staff and volunteers.

This is the first of many events that Saipan Dance Studio plans to host and organize and it hopes it is the first of many collaborations with significant nongovernment organizations like NMCADSV.

Saipan Studio hopes to continue its collaboration with NMCADSV for the promotion of love, hope, and bravery and the call for action to end all forms of violence, especially among the most vulnerable in the community like women and children

Saipan Dance Studio's next charitable performance in February 2023 aims to promote "Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month."

"We hope NMCADSV's continued efforts and these charitable events will help elevate the attention of our community to raise its awareness and personal responsibility and action through continued awareness, collaboration and charity." it said.

Admission to this charitable and meaningful event is $20. Get your tickets today to support the cause and to learn more about Saipan Dance Studio by contacting Johanson or Wang at (670) 989-3303/588-6654. ***(PR)***

UOG, mayors unveil walking path maps in two villages

Residents who have been to the Talo'fo'fo' Baseball Field or the Mangilao Night Market lately may have noticed a colorful new sign featuring walking routes and park maps. The two villages were the first to have the new signs unveiled, with more signs still to come for several other villages.

The maps were created by the Community Nutrition Education Program and the Children's Healthy Living program of University of Guam Cooperative Extension & Outreach and installed by the village mayors to help residents find safe and convenient areas to be active and improve their health.

"Walking and playing at the park is a free and simple way to move more, manage weight, and reduce the risk for chronic diseases," said Dr. Tanisha Aflague, a registered dietitian nutritionist and coordinator of CNEP and CHL at UOG. "These maps are a great resource to encourage residents to get outside and be active and social, which are both important factors for our health."

UOG

Talo'fo'fo' Elementary School students point to different walking route options on a newly installed map near their school and the Talo'fo'fo' Baseball Field.

UOG

Mangilao Mayor Allan Ungacta, right, and Vice Mayor Kevin Delgado, left, with Mangilao residents and the Community Nutrition Education Program team from the University of Guam at the unveiling of a walking paths sign across from the Mangilao Community Center and Mangilao.

The signs include a map of the village's public park areas, with icons indicating where specific amenities can be found. A second map color codes suggested walking routes, with a description of the route, its difficulty level, and the total distance.

The Talo'fo'fo' parks and walking paths sign was unveiled with the help of the mayor's office and students from Talo'fo'fo' Elementary School, who can be active health champions for their community.

"It encourages [our village's] residents to check out the routes and, in doing so, will encourage them to take advantage of the opportunities available to improve their health and wellness," said Mayor Vicente S. Taitague of Talo'fo'fo'.

The Mangilao sign, located between the senior center and Santa Teresita Catholic Church, was unveiled during a recent Mangilao Thursday Night Market.

UOG

A newly installed sign at the Talo'fo'fo' Baseball Field shows several walking routes and public park amenities that residents can utilize in the area.

"We're very glad to partner with UOG and appreciate the placement of the village walking maps and parks sign here at our community park," said Mayor Allan Ungacta of Mangilao. "We encourage families and youth of all ages to take advantage of the walking paths and to exercise regularly."

The next park and walking path signs to be installed will be in the villages of Sinajana and Yoña. Also coming soon from CNEP to specific village parks and daycare playgrounds will be painted gameboards featuring fun physical activities to encourage community members and children to be active.

Walking route maps available online

Residents can access walking and park maps for all villages digitally as well at www.uog.edu/extension/cnep on the "Parks and Trails" tab. Video previews of walking routes and parks are also viewable on the UOG CNEP YouTube channel on the "Guam Walk-a-Mile Maps" playlist and the "Parks & Playgrounds" playlist. ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Truth and consequences: Terrorists, not Israel, caused the Gaza hospital explosion

News, or shall we say "news," of a horrid attack spread faster than you can say "IDF": Israel had bombed a hospital in Gaza, killing hundreds.

Without bothering to verify the claim, which had been initially propagated by Hamas, anti-Israel members of Congress shared it with thousands upon thousands — denouncing it as the latest supposed proof of Israeli inhumanity toward Palestinians. The Associated Press wrote a credulous account stating that "A massive blast rocked a Gaza City hospital packed with wounded and other Palestinians seeking shelter Tuesday, killing hundreds of people, the Hamas-run Health Ministry said."

The New York Times stuck to "he said, she said" language: "Israelis and Palestinians Blame Each Other for Blast at Gaza Hospital That Killed Hundreds."

Turns out, based on everything we now know, it was not an Israeli bomb but a misfired Islamic Jihad rocket that hit the hospital — or, perhaps more accurately, the parking lot adjacent to the hospital. Israel denied responsibility and circulated audio of Hamas operatives admitting as much. President Joe Biden concurred, saying "The data I was shown by my Defense Department" confirmed Israel's account.

That was better late than never, but late indeed, as millions of people around the world already ingested and believed and grew furious based on what they read or heard.

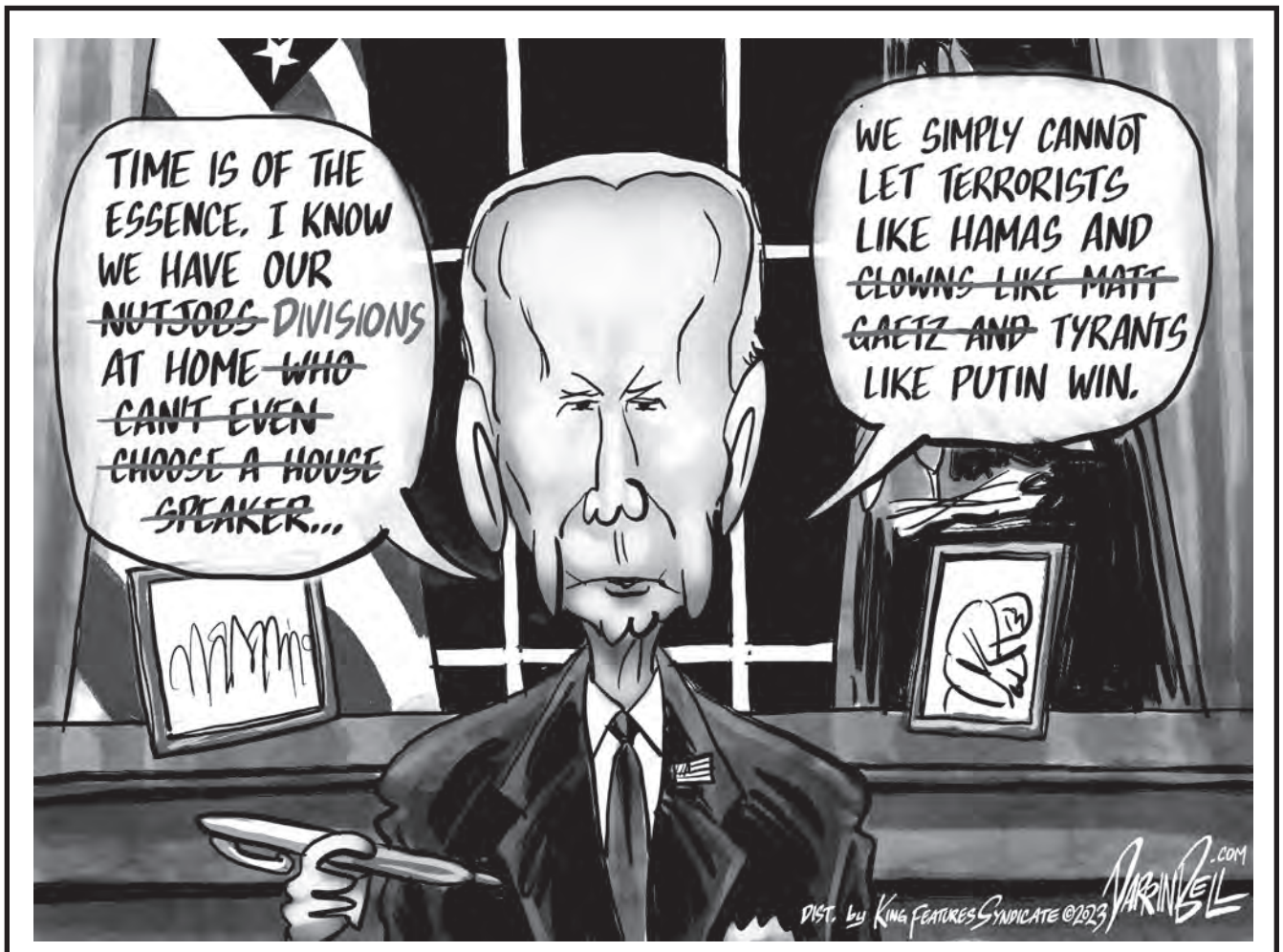
Since the dawn of time, reports from war zones have been shrouded in heavy fog, as governments spread propaganda that's invariably at odds with accounts on the ground. But now the fog is thicker, faster-moving and more poisonous than ever before, as ideologues find the supposed facts needed to support their hardened presuppositions and pass them around before the actual truth can conceivably catch up.

Hilariously, contrary to popular belief it probably wasn't Mark Twain who coined "a lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is still putting on its shoes"; it was Jonathan Swift who said something similar. But the aphorism has stuck for good reason. Lies now travel at the speed of electrons, or light. Rigorous, independent, shoe-leather reporting, which is often the only thing that can clear the fog, takes much more time than that.

If given a bit of time, serious journalists who care about the truth — many of whom still exist, nevermind the best efforts of men like Donald Trump, who seek to cast the entire news media as dishonest—have more tools than ever to suss out what really happened. The U.S. government is using open-source tools and satellite imagery to document war crimes in Ukraine.

Last year, the New York Times and Washington Post relied on such advanced forensic tools, including geocoded video and photographs, to challenge an Israeli account about the killing of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in the West Bank a month earlier.

See TRUTH on Page 9


TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. I KNOW WE HAVE OUR ~~NUTJOBS~~ DIVISIONS AT HOME ~~WHO CAN'T EVEN CHOOSE A HOUSE SPEAKER...~~
WE SIMPLY CANNOT LET TERRORISTS LIKE HAMAS AND ~~CLOWNS LIKE MATT GAETZ AND~~ TYRANTS LIKE PUTIN WIN.
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When will you allow me to grieve the loss of my Jewish brothers and sisters?

By BENJAMIN VAN LOON
Chicago Tribune

Benjamin van Loon is from Chicago and is an adjunct professor in the College of Art & Science at Northeastern Illinois University.

Amid the current wave of bloodshed in Israel and Gaza, it's easy to forget that last week saw the deadliest day for Jewish people since the Holocaust. The Hamas-led slaughter of more than 1,400 Israelis on Oct. 7 will likely be added to the long list of tragic dates we've marked over the centuries, commemorating one slaughter after another.

Politics briefly aside, Oct. 7 was first and foremost a mass slaughter of Jews. More than 1,400 Jews—including Israelis, Americans, Europeans, Asians and anyone standing in their proximity—have been raped, killed, burnt and disappeared. There was no art or statecraft in this. Only pure brutality.

If you're not Jewish, it can be difficult to understand how deep this cuts. Almost every single Jew—me included—is born bearing the trauma of past excommunications, pogroms and genocides, which has produced shame, self-loathing and mistrust. My first moral memory was my mom telling me: It doesn't matter what you believe; they want to kill you anyway.

And then, just last week, we saw hundreds of Jews slaughtered, their deaths live, unfiltered and even celebrated. These horrors trudged up the darkest and most remote memories every Jewish person has locked away in our psychic DNA.

Meanwhile, every single Jewish person is being forced to process our grief for this new historic trauma through the morass of modern political discourse, marked by enmity, opposition and immobility. But because this happened in Israel, many of my well-intentioned and politically "progressive" friends and peers are narrating these same events through their university-honed talking points on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, despite having absolutely no ethnic, cultural, historic or other ties to the region—as usual.

Let's say I just saw my sister get killed by a drunken driver. As I hold her dying hand, watching her bleed out, I'm already wan with anger, sadness and grief. And then an anonymous and well-intentioned passerby, noticing the blood and our ashen faces, pats me on the head and says: "Don't pass judgment; the drunken driver has had a hard life too."

This might be true as an abstraction, but it's also an asinine thing to say—and the absolute worst time to say it.

This is what I hear when, in the face of my grief, you say, "Free Palestine," and accuse Israel of being an apartheid state. Maybe these things are valid, but not as I watch the bodies of my sisters get carted off, raped and murdered, their corpses bandied and desecrated in the streets of Gaza. You're a kindergartner playing cops and robbers. You have no idea what you're talking about while you pantomime pistols.

I'm grieving for my slaughtered sisters, brothers, mothers and fathers. Whether this would have happened in Israel or Indiana, my grief would be the same. But because this happened in Israel, at the same time I'm also grieving for the innocent people in Gaza as they shield themselves from Israel's epic retaliations. I'm disgusted at the fascism of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. I'm nauseated by violent state actions in Israel, like the beatings in Jerusalem last year for the funeral of Al-Jazeera reporter Shireen Abu Akleh. And I'm especially angry at how Hamas has been propped up, trained and unleashed.

But more than this, I'm scared for what this slaughter portends for Jewish people around the world—especially as Jews are being cast simultaneously as scapegoats, boogeymen and villains on two active warfronts (Israel and Ukraine) that also sit as keystones in the gateways between democratic values and unbridled fascism.

At the same time, there are only around 15 million Jews alive today, or 0.2% of the global population. We're a single eyelash on the body of the world. But for millenniums, Jews have been in exactly the spot we're in now—between a rock and a hard place.

It's not unusual to see swastikas at Donald Trump and Proud Boy rallies on the right—and it's increasingly common to see similar symbolism at so-called "Pro-Palestine" rallies on the left. Their rationales are drastically different, but their concluding message to Jews is the same: better that you were dead.

It's possible at the same time to think "Oct. 7 was the worst day for Jews since Adolf Hitler" and "Innocent Gazans do not deserve to be the victims of war crimes." I can hold both these thoughts in my head.

But how many rhetorical hoops do Jewish people need to jump through before the "well-intentioned" among you are satisfied with the language of our grief?

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Crisis resilient urban futures: The future of Asian and Pacific cities 2023

By ARMIDA SALSIAH ALISJAHBANA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana is an Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

Cities have always been dynamic hubs of culture, education, economic growth and opportunity, and most importantly, centers of social interaction attracting residents and visitors alike. It is no surprise then that Asia and the Pacific have in recent years become predominantly urban as people seek greater opportunities and services in cities of all sizes, from coastal communities in the Pacific to mega-cities such as Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Tokyo, and in smaller towns and emerging urban centers, each with unique characteristics reflecting our region's diversity.

The megatrend of urbanization, however, has not been free of difficulties, with many of the global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the increasing effects of climate change, biodiversity loss and various forms of pollution, all converging in our cities. These challenges have made more visible long-standing issues such as inequalities and urban poverty, access to affordable housing, and an infrastructure gap.

Our most vulnerable communities often are those most affected. This is clear in our cities where climate-related disasters disproportionately impact the poor, and women and children are unable to access essential urban services. Meanwhile, a lack of affordable housing hinders the poor and middle classes alike, and inadequate infrastructure too frequently results in persons with disabilities being left behind. Collectively, these challenges not only can harm cities and their residents, but will hinder progress toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goals, many of which intersect in cities.

When cities shuttered during the pandemic, economic activity, tourism, education, and urban services all suffered seemingly irreparable harm. Yet in the aftermath of the global pandemic, we realize that a sustainable future for Asia and the Pacific runs through our cities, and we must take the necessary steps to address existing urban challenges and plan urbanization to be inclusive and resilient to future shocks and crises. And we know how to get there. ESCAP, UN-Habitat and partners have developed a new flagship report, Crisis Resilient Urban Futures: The Future of Asian & Pacific Cities 2023.

Through analysis of the crises and their effects, the report offers practical guidance across four key thematic areas for inclusive urban policies, partnerships, and innovations:

First, urban and territorial planning remains the foundation of how all cities manage their growth and plan urban services. Having seen how crises can disrupt these systems, we know that holistic urban planning that prioritizes multi-use, compact development, low-carbon transportation and mobility, affordable housing and efficient delivery of services are essential for creating safe, sustainable and livable cities for all citizens.

Next, as we are all too frequently reminded by the number of climate-induced disasters in our region, effectively responding to the climate emergency must be a priority, and cities are well positioned to lead innovation and new practices for low-carbon and resilient pathways. A resilient city engages all stakeholders, from the most vulnerable communities to civil society and policy makers from the local to national level, all working to co-develop solutions.

We also live in a more digitally connected world, where urban digital transformations and smart city technologies, if managed effectively, can improve operational efficiencies, bridge the digital divide and ensure access for all. The pandemic underlined the need to include everyone in shaping our digitally transformed future.

Finally, the multiple crises highlighted the urgency to safeguard urban finances. Expanding, diversifying, and increasing municipal revenue should be a key strategy for cities to stimulate local economic recoveries. And as no city can go it alone, robust multi-level governance, supported by transparent public frameworks for intergovernmental transfers, is needed, while more stable policies and incentives can open doors to private sector investment.

Recovery from any shock or crisis takes time and collective action. We must ensure that our urban areas guard against future risks while building safe, sustainable and livable communities and putting us back on track to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

The eighth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, being held this week (Oct. 23-25) in Suwon, Republic of Korea, is a key platform to share urban solutions and enhance partnerships to address the multitude of challenges. Though the task is formidable, with the right policies, innovations, cooperation and the engagement of citizens, we can ensure that our region's cities remain vibrant hubs.

How terrorists and journalists misfired

By MARTIN SCHRAM
Tribune News Service

Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive. Readers may send him email at martin.schram@gmail.com.

When the globe-shaking, protest-inciting, summit-shattering history of this past week is finally written large, history's ultimate chroniclers may conclude it all started with "The Misfire Heard 'Round the World."

But they'll only be half right. Because the history of this literally incredible week—a week of lies and snafus—was really ignited by not just one but two misfires. Call it: Two Misfires that Shook and Shattered Our World.

FIRST MISFIRE: U.S. military and intel experts have concluded that a Palestinian terrorist rocket misfired after being aimed at Israel from inside Gaza, apparently launched by a group called the Islamic Jihad. The misfired terrorist rocket quickly plummeted and exploded in the parking lot of Gaza's al-Ahli Arab Hospital, killing masses of Palestinian civilians. And the tragedy was instantly (see also: predictably) exploited by Hamas, the terrorists who rule Gaza. Hamas had just committed mass atrocities in Israel, knowing that would goad Israel into a massive retaliation that would kill many of Gaza's Palestinian population. That was fine with Hamas. After all, Hamas contemptibly uses Gaza's civilians as human shields, 24/7. Hamas instantly announced Israel had attacked the hospital, even though they had no evidence proving it.

SECOND MISFIRE: The news media of America and the world—even the best and most trusted of us—rushed to rocket around the world the news of the tragedy. But unforgivably, even the best of the U.S. news media joined the rest of the world's news media linking the truth of that attack with Hamas's apparent falsehood that blamed Israel for the attack without offering any evidence. Journalists of course all knew better: Hamas' terrorists infamously live and launch attacks on Israel while using Gaza civilians as human shields. They are willing to see fellow Palestinians killed by Israeli retaliation—if it makes Israel look bad as the whole world watches.

Yet news organizations everywhere fell into the trap. Of course Al Jazeera, the Arab world's famous news blanket that is funded by Qatar, instantly popped up on news screens everywhere reporting that Israel had attacked that Gaza hospital causing massive casualties. But even western journalism's best and brightest did too.

Why? Because in today's news biz, even the best are rushing just to get the most online clicks. Getting it first seems to have overtaken the priority of getting it right. This past week even the best failed to heed the basic stop-sign standards we used to consider business-as-usual.

Let's just spotlight what many consider the best of our news biz.

The New York Times raced to splash your news screens with its first erroneous report of the Gaza hospital explosion at 2:51 p.m. EDT Tuesday. But minutes later, at 3:06:40 p.m., despite having time to get themselves together, the New York Times again fell into Hamas' trap, emailing you: "Breaking News: At least 500 killed in Israeli strike on Gaza hospital, Palestinian officials say." Israeli strike?

You might be thinking it was 100% true that the Palestinian Health Ministry in Gaza said exactly that. But in this age of news manipulation by misinformation, we must rethink how and what we report. Reporting lies—just because they were said—doesn't mean we are reporting what actually happened. (Example: When Donald Trump's apparatchiks claimed voting machines changed 2020 Trump votes into Biden votes, their false words didn't mean it really happened. So our media stopped spreading their big lie.)

This past week, faster than you can say "click bait," millions who trusted our journalism's best got the worst. Our news media's best joined the rest in plunging us into Hamas' trap.

It took two days for U.S. military and intel experts to conclude with certainty that the hospital bombing didn't have the crater an Israeli airstrike would have created—but it had all the signs of a misfired Palestinian terrorist rocket that simply failed and fell.

But by then it was too late for truth to prevail. News screens had gushed apparent misinformation blaming Israel for the attack. That ignited rage throughout the Arab world. Once the fury of false allegations gushes out of news screens, it can't be put back into the tube. Instant protests of Arab activists and Palestinian sympathizers rocked Middle East capitals. Of course, that caused Arab leaders to cancel their planned summit in Jordan, where Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, U.S. President Joe Biden, Saudi and Gulf state leaders might have headed off the next hell in Gaza.

Breaking News: That's how Hamas terrorists got what they wanted most this past week—the cancellation of what they knew would be an anti-Hamas Arab summit.

Broken News: Our News Deciders must fix what they broke. It's an easy fix. Don't let the liars and manipulators win. Just return to the standard that made getting it right our top priority.

TRUTH

From page 8

But the forces of disinformation are growing ever more sophisticated, too. It's not just that propaganda without evidentiary support is readily amplified by countless useful idiots. Deepfake technology is giving ever more people and organizations, no matter how dishonest, the tools to fabricate seemingly credible evidence. If cancerous cynicism metastasizes, with sympathizers only ever believing what they wish to believe and writing off as fake all inconvenient facts, we will be truly lost.

Hope and pray we're not already there.

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To Share a Place

LITERARY NOOK

By DUSTIN RADKE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Dustin Radke was born in Wahiawa, Hawaii and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. He now lives in Puerto Rico, Saipan.

The two of them were barely friends back then
But naked make-outs rarely sparked a fight
So they came facing one another,
Promising the yachts and knots and farm all night

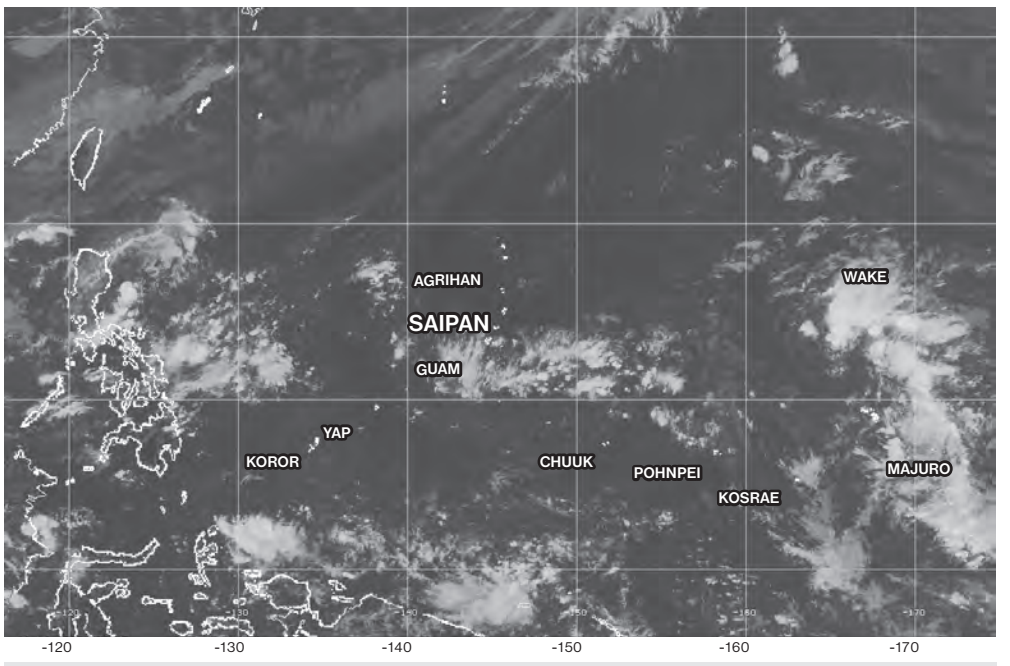
God knows they'd squabble over Halloween,
Today if they were made to share a place
The two of them were barely friends back then
Although they held each other face to face

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly sunny with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy.	Partly cloudy.
87 / 79°	87 / 79°	87 / 79°	87 / 79°	87 / 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:51 AM, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam Doppler weather radar shows scattered showers moving through the Marianas Waters this morning, mainly over Guam and Rota at this time. The Ipan and Tanapag buoys reveal a 4 to 6 foot east-northeast trade-wind swell, which combined with wind waves suggests combined seas of 5 to 7 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 76°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	88° / 76°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:10 AM	5:52 PM
Tuesday	6:10 AM	5:51 PM
Wednesday	6:10 AM	5:52 PM
Thursday	6:11 AM	5:50 PM
Friday	6:11 AM	5:50 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:19 AM	1:44 PM
Tuesday	-	1:21 AM	2:32 PM
Wednesday	-	2:22 AM	3:16 PM
Thursday	-	3:21 AM	3:58 PM
Friday	-	4:18 AM	4:39 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Rain	64° / 57°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	73° / 54°
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	88° / 79°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	88° / 78°
London	Showers	59° / 54°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	74° / 60°
Manila	Thunderstorm	90° / 79°
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	57° / 45°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°
New York	Showers	59° / 53°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	82° / 70°
Paris	Showers	61° / 52°
Busan	Sunny	72° / 57°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	75° / 61°
Salem	Thunderstorm	86° / 62°
San Francisco	Sunny	65° / 53°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	68° / 52°
Tokyo	Showers	79° / 64°
Washington, DC	Showers	63° / 56°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
12:13 AM	Low Tide	1.50
8:16 AM	High Tide	-0.13
4:11 PM	Low Tide	1.79
9:57 PM	High Tide	1.20

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 8, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:20PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:20AM	6:30AM	1, 4, 5, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA184	11:50PM	5:50AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ702/625	12:05PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35PM	2:20AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

World Resort holds productive meeting with CNMI gov't

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, left, and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, right, recently welcomed Seolhaeone Group vice chair Kiyeon Kwon, second from right, at the Office of the Governor on Capital Hill for a courtesy visit. Seolhaeone Group is the principal shareholder of Saipan World Resort.

Vice chair Kiyeon Kwon of Seolhaeone Group, a principal shareholder of Saipan World Resort, held a courtesy visit to the Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang.

The meeting served as an opportunity for mutual introduction and fruitful dialogue, laying the foundation for promising collaborations between the resort and the CNMI government.

During the meeting, Kwon gave a short overview of Saipan World Resort's shareholder company and the current market trends, especially the need for the CNMI to strengthen ties with the Korean market, along with requesting enhancing infrastructure and beautifying the CNMI to create an even more appealing environment for tourists.

Palacios conveyed his administration's commitment to collaboration with the Marianas Visitors Authority to raise awareness of the CNMI as a premier tourist destination in Korea and diversifying to other tourist markets in the region and shared various improvement projects around the islands, such as the beach road improvement project.

Kwon expressed his recognition of the CNMI as an excellent destination for the Korean market due to its unique blend of culture, tropical ambiance, and breathtaking natural beauty. The governor and Kwon shared their enthusiasm for the CNMI's tourism industry as they discussed their plans to capitalize on these strengths.

Overall, the meeting proved to be a fruitful dialogue between the Palacios administration and Saipan World Resort, one of the major hotels on Saipan. Both the governor and Kwon expressed their desire to continue their cooperation and personal interactions to further develop the CNMI's tourism industry going forward. ***(PR)***

US auto workers' union boss says strikes will continue in bid for better offers from companies

DETROIT (AP)—United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain said Friday that while Detroit's automakers have increased their wage and benefit offers, he believes the union can gain more if it holds out longer in contract talks.

In a Facebook Live appearance, Fain didn't announce any more factories to add to those that have been on strike for up to five weeks. But he warned that the UAW could announce such an expansion of its strikes at any time, depending on how much progress it makes in its negotiations with the automakers.

In the past 24 hours, Fain said, Stellantis and GM have made wage offers that matched Ford's 23% over the life of a four year contract. But, speaking in his characteristic sharp tones, the union president insisted that the companies can go further.

"We've got cards left to play, and they've got money left to spend," he said.

Arguing that Ford "pretends they can't afford what we're asking for," Fain noted that the company has complained about the union's walkout at the Kentucky Truck Plant in Louisville, which has had to shut down. That plant is the largest and most profitable Ford factory in the world.

"We took their biggest plant out and they haven't come back with anything new," he said.

Though Fain said the UAW will make a push to secure more generous offers from the automakers, he addressed union members who have said they're ready to vote on the deals. Fain asserted that the companies are trying to divide the union.

"They just want to wait us out," he said. "They want to divide. They want fear and they want uncertainty. What we have is solidarity."

While Fain said the companies keep touting that they've made record offers to the UAW, he said they're insufficient to make up for how much ground workers have lost during the past two decades. Each time the automakers make an offer, Fain said, they insist it's the best they can do, only to return days later with a better offer.

"What that should tell you," Fain said, is that "there's room to move."

In a statement, GM said it made an offer Friday with "substantial movement in all key areas in an effort to reach a final agreement with the UAW and get our people back to work."

Stellantis said it and the union have made progress to narrow gaps on significant issues "that will bring immediate financial gains and job security for our employees." The company said it's focused on resolving the issues as soon as possible.

Ford has said that, among the three automakers, its contract offers to the UAW have been the most generous.

"We know that our UAW employees are hurting in this prolonged strike because of lost wages and lost profit sharing," Ford's statement said. "We're eager to conclude these negotiations with a contract that meaningfully improves their lives and provides a strong future for everyone."

Long lines at gas pump unlikely

» But Middle East crisis could disrupt oil supplies, raise prices

WASHINGTON (AP)—Fifty years after the 1973 Arab oil embargo, the current crisis in the Middle East has the potential to disrupt global oil supplies and push prices higher. But don't expect a repeat of the catastrophic price hikes and long lines at the gasoline pump, experts say.

The Israel-Hamas war is "definitely not good news" for oil markets already stretched by cutbacks in oil production from Saudi Arabia and Russia and expected stronger demand from China, the head of the International Energy Agency said.

Markets will remain volatile, and the conflict could push oil prices higher, "which is definitely bad news for inflation," Fatih Birol, executive director of the Paris-based IEA, told The Associated Press. Developing countries that import oil and other fuels would be the most affected by higher prices, he said.

International benchmark Brent crude closed at $93 a barrel on Friday, up from $85 on Oct. 6, the day before Hamas attacked Israel, killing hundreds of civilians. Israel immediately launched airstrikes on Gaza, destroying entire neighborhoods and killing hundreds of Palestinian civilians in the days that have followed.

Fluctuations since the attack pushed oil prices as high as $96.

The price of oil depends on how much of it is getting used and how much is available. The latter is under threat because of the Hamas-Israel war, even though the Gaza Strip is not home to major crude production.

One worry is that the fighting could lead to complications with Iran, home of some of the world's largest oil reserves. Its crude production has been constrained by international sanctions, but oil is still flowing to China and other countries.

"In order to get a sustained move (in prices), we really would need to see a supply disruption," said Andrew Lipow, president at Lipow Oil Associates, a Houston-based consultant.

Any damage to Iranian oil infrastructure from a military strike by Israel could send prices jumping globally. Even without that, a shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz that lies south of Iran could also shake the oil market because so much of the world's supplies goes through the waterway.

Until something like that happens, "the oil market is going to be like everyone else, monitoring the events in the Middle East," Lipow said.

One reason 1970s-style gas lines are unlikely: U.S. oil production is at an all-time high. The U.S. Energy Information Administration, an arm of the Energy Department, reported that American oil production in the first week of October hit 13.2 million barrels per day, passing the previous record set in 2020 by 100,000 barrels. Weekly domestic oil production has doubled from the first week in October 2012 to now.

"The energy crisis of 1973 taught us many things, but in my mind, the most critical is that American energy strength is a tremendous source of security, prosperity and freedom around the world," said Mike Sommers, president and CEO of the American Petroleum Institute, the U.S. oil industry's top lobbying group.

In a speech Wednesday marking the 50th anniversary of the 1973 oil embargo, Sommers said current U.S. production contrasts sharply with "America's weakened position during the Arab oil embargo." He urged U.S. policymakers to heed what he called the lessons of 1973.

"We cannot squander our strategic advantage and retreat on energy leadership," said Sommers, who has repeatedly criticized President Joe Biden's policies restricting restricting new oil leases as part of Biden's efforts to slow global climate change.

Nation

House GOP drops Jordan as its nominee for speaker

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans abruptly dropped Rep. Jim Jordan on Friday as their nominee for House speaker, making the decision during a closed-door session after the hard-edged ally of Donald Trump failed badly on a third ballot for the gavel.

The outcome left Republicans dejected, frustrated and sinking deeper into turmoil, another week without a House speaker bordering on a full-blown crisis. House Republicans have no realistic or working plan to unite the fractured GOP majority, elect a new speaker and return to the work of Congress that has been languishing since hardliners ousted Kevin McCarthy at the start of the month.

Afterward, Jordan said simply of his colleagues, "We put the question to them, they made a different decision."

The hard-charging Judiciary Committee chairman said House Republicans now need to come together and "figure out who our speaker is going to be."

Their majority control floundering, Republicans left the private session blaming one another for the divisions they have created. Next steps were highly uncertain, as a wide range of Republican lawmakers started pitching themselves for speaker.

But it appears no one at present can win a GOP majority, leaving the House without a speaker and unable to function for the foreseeable future, an embarrassing blow to a central U.S. seat of government.

"We're in a very bad place right now," McCarthy said.

Majority Leader Steve Scalise said they would "start over" Monday. New nominees are to come forward for a candidate forum and internal party votes.

Exasperated with no easy solutions in sight, Rep. Mark Alford, a freshman from Missouri, was far from alone in expressing his anger and disappointment.

"I gave up my career to come here to do something for America, to rebuild our military, to get spending under control, to secure our border—and here we are in this quicksand," he said.

In a floor vote Friday morning, Jordan's third reach for the gavel, he lost 25 Republican colleagues, worse than he had fared earlier in the week, and leaving him far from the majority needed.

A founder of the far-right House Freedom Caucus, Jordan's run essentially collapsed in large part because more centrist Republicans are revolting over the nominee they view as too extreme and the hardball tactics being used to win their votes. They have been bombarded with harassing phone calls and even reported death threats.

To win over GOP colleagues, Jordan had relied on backing from Trump, the party's front-runner in the 2024 election, and groups pressuring rank-and-file lawmakers for the vote. But they were not enough and in fact backfired on some.

Friday's vote was 194 for Jordan, his lowest tally yet, and 210 for Jeffries, with two absences on each side.

In fact, Jordan lost rather than gained votes despite hours spent trying to win over holdouts, no improvement from the 20 and then 22 Republicans he lost in early rounds this week.

McCarthy himself rose in the chamber to nominate Jordan, portraying him as a skilled legislator who reaches for compromise. That drew scoffs of laughter from the Democratic side of the aisle.

Democrats nominated Leader Hakeem Jeffries, with Rep. Katherine Clark calling Jordan, who refused to certify the 2020 presidential election results, "a threat to democracy."

Biden dangling border security money to try to get billions more for Israel, Ukraine

WASHINGTON (AP)— President Joe Biden is trying to sweeten his pitch for more money for Ukraine by mixing in billions of dollars for securing the U.S.-Mexico border in the hope that it will bring more Republicans on board.

The idea came up late last month, after Ukraine assistance was stripped out of a stopgap measure to keep the government running due to growing Republican resistance to financing the war effort. A lot has changed since Sept. 30: The House has lost its speaker and Republicans are in disarray over selecting a new one, and the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israel has prompted a much bigger funding request by the White House.

It's not at all clear that including roughly $14 billion in border money included as part of the the $106 billion spending package the White House sent to Congress on Friday will placate those who are resisting.

"The border has never been a money issue," said Rep. Dan Crenshaw, R-Texas. "It has always been a policy issue. So we need to get in a room, go to the White House and sort that out."

The conflict in the Mideast may have pulled some of the spotlight away from the U.S.-Mexico border for now, but the migration challenges facing the U.S. are growing increasingly intractable. Democratic leaders at both the state and local level are begging for federal assistance to help care for migrant families living in squalid shelters and sleeping in police stations. Republicans are loudly critical of Biden's border policies as too lax. And Congress has not passed an immigration overhaul in decades.

There are rising numbers of migrants at the border; arrests for illegal crossings along the U.S.-Mexico line were up 21% to 218,763 last month, and Biden has repeatedly said Congress should act to fix outdated immigration laws. But in the meantime, his administration has developed policies that aim to deter migrants from making a dangerous and often deadly journey while also opening up new legal immigration pathways.

The funding request is an attempt not only to manage people crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, but also to deal with the growing numbers of migrants who are already here, waiting for their cases to play out.

The White House proposal includes $1.6 billion to hire 1,600 new asylum officers and processing personnel, which could double the number of people working on asylum cases. It also suggests $1.4 billion to add 375 immigration judges and their teams in addition to money for 1,300 new border patrol agents. There is $4.4 billion for Homeland Security efforts, including increased funding for holding facilities as the administration works to quickly deport those who do not qualify for asylum.

World

Israel: Two Americans held hostage by Hamas released

AP

In this photo provided by the Government of Israel, Judith Raanan, right, and her 17-year-old daughter Natalie are escorted by Israeli soldiers and Gal Hirsch, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's special coordinator for returning the hostages, as they return to Israel from captivity in the Gaza Strip, Friday, Oct. 20, 2023.

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP)—Hamas on Friday freed an American woman and her teenage daughter who had been held hostage in Gaza, Israel said, the first such release from among the roughly 200 people the militant group abducted from Israel during its Oct. 7 rampage.

Judith Raanan and her 17-year-old daughter, Natalie, were out of the Gaza Strip and in the hands of the Israeli military, an army spokesman said. Hamas said it released them for humanitarian reasons in an agreement with the Qatari government.

The release comes amid growing expectations of a ground offensive that Israel says is aimed at rooting out Hamas militants who rule Gaza. Israel said Friday it does not plan to take long-term control over the tiny territory, home to some 2.3 million people.

As the Israeli military punished Gaza with airstrikes, authorities inched closer to bringing aid from Egypt to desperate families and hospitals. Fighting between Israel and militants in neighboring Lebanon also raged, prompting evacuations of Lebanese and Israeli border towns as fears of a widening conflict grew.

Judith and Natalie Raanan had been on a trip from their home in suburban Chicago to Israel to celebrate Jewish holidays, the family said. They were in the kibbutz of Nahal Oz, near Gaza, on Oct. 7 when Hamas and other militants stormed into southern Israeli towns, killing hundreds and abducting 203 others.

The family had heard nothing from them since the attack and were later told by U.S. and Israeli officials that they were being held in Gaza, Natalie's brother Ben said.

U.S. President Joe Biden spoke with the two freed hostages and their relatives. The International Committee of the Red Cross, which transported the freed Americans from Gaza to Israel, said their release was "a sliver of hope."

Relatives of other captives welcomed the release and appealed for more people to be freed.

Hamas said in a statement that it was working with mediators "to close the case" of hostages if security circumstances permit. The group added that it is committed to mediation efforts by Egypt, Qatar and other countries.

Russian forces make renewed push to take eastern Ukraine towns with drones, missiles, and mortars

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—At least three civilians were killed and others wounded in Ukraine on Friday and Saturday, as Russian forces continued to shell areas across the country and pushed forward near an embattled eastern city, local Ukrainian officials reported Saturday.

A man died as Russian forces shelled the Ukrainian-held town of Nikopol from their stronghold at Ukraine's largest nuclear plant, according to Ukrainian local Gov. Serhii Lysak. Lysak said that emergency services in Nikopol were working to assess the damage.

Russian troops took over the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant early in the war, sparking intermittent fears of a radiation incident as shelling persisted near the site, often targeting Ukrainian-controlled settlements across the Dnieper River.

In Kryvyi Rih, the central Ukraine hometown of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, a 60-year-old man died on Friday evening when a Russian missile slammed into an industrial facility, according to Telegram posts by Mayor Oleksandr Vilkul. The man's wife was hospitalized with serious shrapnel wounds, Vilkul said.

The mayor reported that Russian missiles and drones hit the same place again overnight, causing unspecified damage and sparking a fire that was put out by morning. Vilkul did not elaborate on the site's nature or whether it was linked to Ukraine's war effort. He said nobody was hurt in the second strike.

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov later told reporters that Russian forces destroyed the Ukrainian military's fuel and ammunition depots near Kryvyi Rih's local airport.

†Felipe Ada Roberto

Lovingly Known as **"Felipen Chungi"**
Sunrise: August 24, 1934 | Sunset: October 15, 2023

In his Eternal Life, he now Joins:

1st Wife	:	†Ana Borja Roberto
Father/Mother	:	†Juan S. Roberto &†Engracia A. Roberto
Father and Mother-In-Law	:	†Jose C. Borja & †Aguida S. Borja
Brother/Sisters	:	†Andres A. Roberto †Dolores A. Roberto †Rosa A. Roberto
Brothers/Sisters-In-Law	:	†Trinidad B. & †Juan A. DLGuerrero †Crecensia B. & †Felix Villagomez †Carmen B. & Jesus SM. Ichihara †Grabrella B. Camacho †Margarita S. Borja †Maria B. Roberto †Teresita B. & †Vicente Lizama
Sons-In-law	:	†Jose B. Babauta †Juan Q. Inos
Granddaughter	:	†Ashley Nicole B. Roberto
Great- Granddaughter	:	†Sophia Joy R. Manalo

His Beautiful Spirit and Memory will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife	:	Ketsuda Kongpim Roberto
Children	:	Engracia R. Babauta (†Jose B. Babauta), Children, and Grandchildren; Juan B. Roberto & Flora Castro, Children, and Grandchildren; Marcelino B. & Julie B. Roberto, Children, and Grandchildren; Jose B. & Maria Linda S. Roberto, Children, and Grandchildren; Dolores R. & James McAllister, Children, and Grandchildren; Rosalia Julita R. Inos (†Juan Q. Inos), Children, and Grandchildren; Francisco Paul B. Roberto & Kuuipo Kalanui, Children, and Grandchildren; Pedro B. & Perdita DLG Roberto, Children, and Grandchildren; Rochelle Ann B. Roberto (Derek L. Bannamon) and Child; Kamoltiwa (Moi) K. Roberto & Franko Nakamura, and Child; Preeyanuch (Miki) R. & Jesse Joe Blesoch.
Sister-In-Law	:	Jacoba B. & Lito Asuncion
God Children	:	Jose Reyes, Sam Aldan, Margarita Palacios, Engracia Aldan, Ana DLG. Ma'a'nao, Juan Lizama, & Rovic Copada Razon.

Our Beloved †Felipe is survived by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, and nieces.

Daily mass of intention is being celebrated at Saint Jude Church
(Monday through Saturday at 6 p.m. and on Sunday at 6 a.m.).

Funeral Service will be held on October 24th, 2023. His remains will leave Borja Funeral Home at 7:45 a.m. and will be escorted to Mt. Carmel Cathedral. Public viewing will be at 8 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 10:00 am, followed by Interment services at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery where he will be peacefully laid to rest.

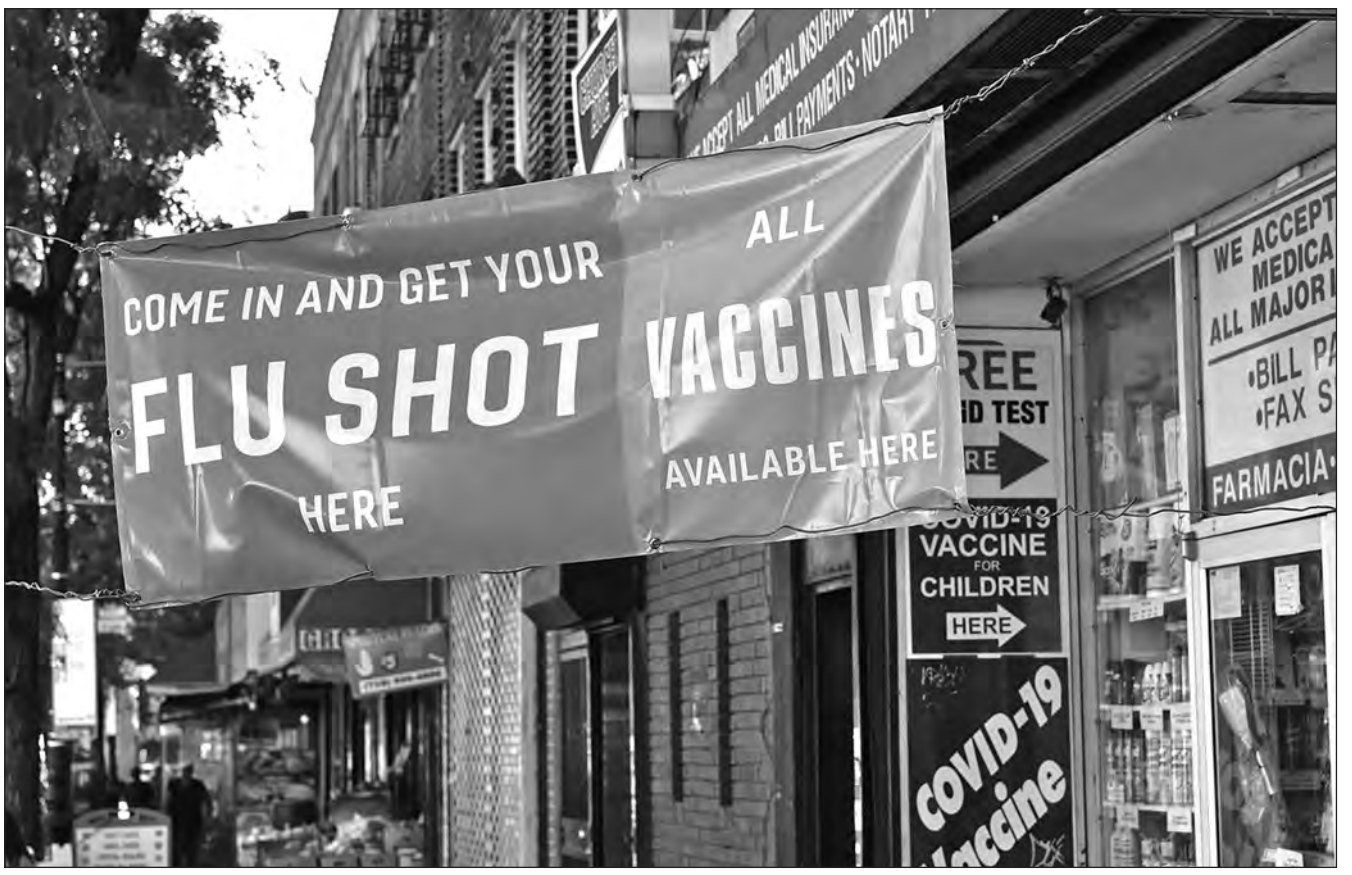
Thank you, Un Dangkulu na Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Yan Olomwaay Reemi

From

Ketsuda Roberto and Children

Health & Wellness

Can you get COVID-19 and the flu at the same time?



MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO

A banner for vaccines is seen at a pharmacy on Sept. 1, 2023, in the Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn borough in New York City.

By DEEDEE STIEPAN
Mayo Clinic News Network

Influenza, COVID-19, the common cold and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are among the respiratory viruses that will be circulating this fall and winter seasons. These highly contagious viruses cause similar symptoms, making it difficult to differentiate between them.

Those symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Body aches

Matthew Binnicker, Ph.D., director of the Clinical Virology Laboratory at Mayo Clinic, says it is possible for people to contract more than one virus at the same time.

"We've seen patients that are unfortunate enough to contract COVID-19 and influenza," says Dr. Binnicker. "There are patients who have COVID-19 and other viruses as well, that are not infected with influenza. They typically have similar symptoms. Some of the cases have been more severe because they're infected with multiple viruses. It's not a high occurrence, but it does happen."

If someone were to develop flu-like symptoms, the first step Dr. Binnicker recommends is getting tested for COVID-19. Your health care provider also can order a test for influenza and RSV.

"We have lab-based PCR tests that test for influenza and respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, at the same time, and some of the tests that we have in our laboratories will also include COVID-19," says Dr. Binnicker.

Prevention is key

"Prevention is key, and there are a number of ways that we can help to do that. The first and foremost way to prevent influenza, COVID-19, and even RSV for select groups, is vaccination," says Dr. Binnicker.

It is safe to receive the COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same time. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved updated COVID-19 vaccines that are targeting the most current circulating strains of the virus.

"I'd encourage everyone to go out and get both their influenza and updated COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible. And then recently, this year, there are new vaccines available for RSV," says Dr. Binnicker.

This year, the FDA approved the first RSV vaccine for adults over the age of 60. There are also approved RSV vaccines for infants and expecting mothers between week 32 and week 36 of pregnancy.

Back to the basics

Along with getting recommended vaccinations, Dr. Binnicker says basic prevention measures can help keep you and your family healthy.

"Then you get to the basics, good hand hygiene. If you're sick, stay home. If you have to get out, wear a mask if you have any symptoms. Then testing so that we know what we're dealing with, and we can take good steps to prevent transmission to other people," says Dr. Binnicker.

Managing sleep during menopause

By SONYA GOINS
Mayo Clinic News Network

Women typically go through menopause between the ages of 45-55. It's a natural biological process that marks the end of a woman's reproductive cycle. This transition can usher in many symptoms, including hot flashes, anxiety and difficulty sleeping.

Dr. Stephanie Faubion, director of Mayo Clinic Women's Health and medical director of the North American Menopause Society, says simple lifestyle changes can help women get a good night's sleep during menopause.

It's difficult to drift off into dreamland when dealing with hot flashes and night sweats. These are just some of the symptoms that women in menopause go through.

"I had one woman described that she sweated out her mattress, and the mattress molded because she was sweating so much at night. So, this can really be a significant problem, and it can disrupt sleep," says Dr. Faubion.

She says hormonal fluctuations can affect the sleep cycle and sometimes cause insomnia. Mood changes and anxiety also will keep some women up at night, counting sheep.

"We do know that hormone therapy does tend to help with a lot of those factors and does help improve sleep," says Dr. Faubion.

Setting up a sleep routine is crucial for menopausal women. Simple things like limiting caffeine and screen time can make it easier to fall asleep.

"Like making sure you get enough exercise but not right before bed, avoiding a heavy meal right before bed—those are some of the things that you can do to help maintain a good night's sleep," says Dr. Faubion.

Tips for better sleep during menopause

- Avoid heavy meals before bed.
- Minimize exposure to light before bed.
- Avoid napping after 3 p.m.
- Don't exercise before bed.
- Create a relaxing bedtime ritual.
- Keep electronics out of bedroom.
- Stick to a sleep schedule.

Dr. Faubion, medical editor of The New Rules of Menopause, is one of the nation's leading experts on menopause and regularly treats women with menopausal concerns.

Why kids love sweets

ON NUTRITION

BY BARBARA INTERMILL
Tribune News Service

Barbara Intermill is a registered dietitian nutritionist and syndicated columnist. She is the author of Quinn-Essential Nutrition: The Uncomplicated Science of Eating. *Email her at barbara@quinnessentialnutrition.com.*

DREAMSTIME

Halloween candy at the ready.

My 9-year-old grandson recently told me the bits of spinach in my tortellini soup were his "worst nightmare." A bit over-dramatic, don't you think?

This same kid has no problem downing any sweet treat that comes his way, however.

Why do kids have such a strong preference for sweets? We are born with it, say experts. It's this initial taste for sugar that may drive us to seek our first food. Human milk is high in the natural sugar, lactose—an easily digested source of energy that also promotes the growth of beneficial bacteria in an infant's gut, according to a 2019 consensus article on lactose in the journal Nutrients.

American children aren't the only ones who love sweets. A 2021 article in the Journal of Sensory Studies states that a child's "heightened preference for sweetness is universal across cultures."

Granted, these kids are growing fast and need extra calories. Nutritionally though, the amount of sugar most kids consume has clearly crossed the line. Starting at age 2, kids and adults alike are called to eat no more than 10% of our daily calories from sugar, according to the current dietary guidelines for Americans. They are currently well above that limit.

A "moderate" intake of added sugar for my active 9-year-old grandson, for example, is no more than about 160 calories from sweets each day. That computes to about 1/4 cup of Skittles … and not in the place of more nutritious foods.

How do we do that without being overly restrictive, which can often backfire into worse habits? A 2020 research article in Obesity Science & Practice found some strategies that may help.

This family-based study reported that when moderate amounts of candy were made available in the home and children were also taught to "savor the flavor" and be more mindful about eating these foods, the kids actually ate less of them. Oh, and parents also had to stop using candy as a reward.

Mindful eating takes time and that's the point. Try this when kids come in ready to devour a bag of Halloween candy: Take one piece. Slowly upwrap it. Smell it. Suck on it for 10 seconds or take a small bite and enjoy the taste. Eat it slowly and think about how yummy each bite tastes.

Kids need to experience a wide variety of foods (even spinach) in their formative years. Not to put on the pressure, but experts say our adult preferences are shaped by the experiences we had as children.

As my grandfather used to say, too much of anything, including Halloween candy, is not good for you. Our goal, then, is to help our kids develop a healthy respect for food and to learn to eat goodies in moderation. Good luck!

Life & Style

Will Smith joins Jada Pinkett Smith at book talk

BALTIMORE (AP)—Will Smith joined Jada Pinkett Smith on stage as she promoted her new memoir in her Baltimore hometown Wednesday night, pledging lifelong support for her just a week after she revealed that the couple had been separated since 2016.

"Jada is the best friend I have ever had on this planet, and I am going to show up for her and support her for the rest of my life," he told the crowd at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, crediting Pinkett Smith's sacrifices for his successes, news outlets reported.

Smith's appearance with their two children, Jaden and Willow, and his son Trey Smith, was apparently a surprise for Pinkett Smith. It came at the end of a talk about her book, "Worthy." Pinkett Smith said the family, including her aunt and uncle and Will Smith's mother and sister, was in town to celebrate the 70th birthday of her mother, Adrienne Banfield-Norris, on Wednesday.

Smith called their relationship "brutiful," explaining that it was both brutal and beautiful.

"It is a sloppy public experiment in unconditional love," he said, a description that prompted Pinkett Smith to double over in laughter.

AP

This photo provided by Enoch Pratt Free Library shows Jada Pinkett Smith and Will Smith at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore on Wednesday, Oct. 18, 2023.

Pinkett Smith told The Baltimore Sun that their estrangement was in the past and that she and Smith have been working in the last 18 months to repair their relationship.

"Will and me are good," Pinkett Smith told Laura Coates of CNN, who moderated Wednesday night's discussion. "All the people who don't understand and got something to say are just going to have to fall in line.

"The truth of the matter is I'm not leaving Will's side and he's not going to leave mine. We've been on a powerful quest. And I'm happier than I've ever been," she added.

The book by the actor, who first revealed the bombshell news of their separation to NBC's Hoda Kotb, details their marriage, her Hollywood journey, her unconventional parenting style and gives her perspective of Smith infamously slapping Chris Rock during the 2022 Academy Awards ceremony over a joke about her shaved head (Pinkett Smith revealed in 2018 that she had a form of alopecia).

Pinkett Smith told The Associated Press that she is feeling free since opening up about the separation.

"It's a weight off my shoulders, honestly," Pinkett Smith said in an AP interview this week. "Ever since the Oscars, it's so interesting how such an intense event can bring you closer together, and I would say that after that, we really dove in and dug in and got to this beautiful place we are now."

Denver wants case against Marlon Wayans stemming from luggage dispute dismissed

DENVER (AP)—Denver prosecutors asked a judge on Friday to dismiss a case against Marlon Wayans stemming from a luggage dispute with an airline employee who the actor and comedian said targeted him because of his race.

Wayans

The city attorney's office's request comes a day after Wayans, who is Black, asked for the case to be dismissed and accused prosecutors of perpetuating the discrimination he faced by continuing with the case. Assistant City Attorney Katie Conner did not directly explain why prosecutors wanted the case dismissed, but she suggested that information gathered by Wayans' lawyers about white passengers being allowed to violate United Airlines' luggage limit played a role.

One of Wayans' lawyers, David M. Beller, said a judge has granted the request. He applauded the city's decision.

"Our community does not need one more innocent Black man wrongfully accused and wrongfully convicted," Beller said. "I hope this inspires everyone to be more aware of their own implicit and explicit bias."

A spokesperson for the city attorney's office did not return an email seeking comment.

Wayans was cited for disturbing the peace, a municipal violation, in June, police said.

According to Wayans' motion to dismiss the case, a United Airlines gate agent told him he could not get on a flight to Kansas City with three bags. The gate agent tried to physically block Wayans from getting on the flight after he consolidated his luggage into two bags to conform with airline policy, according to the filing. Wayans boarded anyway and was later asked to get off the plane before it departed.

While Wayans was working to rearrange his luggage, the gate agent kept allowing white passengers with three bags to board the flight, according to the court filing, which included still photos from surveillance video of white passengers with yellow arrows pointing to each of their bags. About 140 people boarded the flight, the filing said, many with three bags and oversized bags that violated the airline's policy.

MTV cancels EMAs awards show in Paris, citing Israel-Hamas war

PARIS (AP)—The MTV Europe Music Awards on Thursday canceled its performance-packed ceremony slated for next month, citing the Israel-Hamas War.

The event had been scheduled for Paris on Nov. 5, with Ozuna, Renée Rapp and Thirty Seconds to Mars among the performers.

"The MTV EMAs are an annual celebration of global music. As we watch the devastating events in Israel and Gaza continue to unfold, this does not feel like a moment for a global celebration. With thousands of lives already lost, it is a moment of mourning," a company spokesperson said in a statement.

The statement also said the decision was made "out of an abundance of caution for the thousands of employees, crew members, artists, fans, and partners who travel from all corners of the world to bring the show to life."

MTV said the EMAs would return in November 2024.

Taylor Swift was the big winner at last year's EMAs in Dusseldorf, Germany, collecting four trophies including for best artist, best video and best longform video.

Swift was again this year's top nominee with seven, with Olivia Rodrigo and SZA tied for second with six apiece.

Cross-dressing man eager for Halloween opportunity

DEAR ABBY: I'm a cross-dresser who is able to enjoy wearing women's clothes in private at home. With Halloween around the corner, I want nothing more than to be fully dressed as a woman and go outside to experience how it feels. I want to wear a nice dress, high heels, pantyhose, wig, makeup, etc.

My wife knows I enjoy dressing up and tolerates it. But she's unwilling to let me express myself out of the house or help me with the process. How can I get her to help me get dolled up and experience being a woman for one night? I feel so deprived not being able to be who I want to be.

DRESSED AND READY

DEAR DRESSED: Halloween is the one night of the year when many people, yourself included, can decide to dress up and become who they really are (or would like to be). Because your wife won't assist you, consider visiting a makeup counter and asking one of the salespeople to help with your makeup that night. And, if nothing in your closet suits the real you, rent or buy an outfit for the occasion. You do not need anyone's "permission."

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: A very good friend and neighbor sold a Taylor Swift ticket to my 15-year-old daughter for $900. I should mention, my daughter would have given her right arm for the chance to go to the show. The original ticket was purchased for $300, including fees. Initially, my friend wanted to sell it for $1,000, but she offered a "discount" because my daughter's 16th birthday was coming up.

I can appreciate the value of the hottest ticket in town and that it comes with an inflated price tag. However, from my point of view, it was merely a transaction meant for my friend to make a handsome profit off of my kid. I'm extremely disappointed at the price gouging, and now I think of the woman differently. I have been avoiding her because she will likely become defensive. Am I wrong in thinking her actions were not that of a good friend after all?

FEELING SWINDLED IN THE WEST

DEAR FEELING SWINDLED: Because your neighbor sold the ticket to your daughter at three times what she paid for it, I would have to agree; she acted more like a ticket broker than a good friend. I see no reason why you should cut her off completely, but now you know she's a shark when it comes to "business," so keep your eyes open. On the upside, your daughter got to live her dream that night, and many of the fans who saw Taylor Swift in action have said it was the best show of their lives.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: What's the best way to tell your siblings you think it's time to stop exchanging Christmas gifts? We're all in our 60s, and, frankly, I don't feel they are ever very enthused about what we get them. It just seems like it's time, anyway.

DONE IN NEW YORK

DEAR DONE: The best way to convey that message would be verbally, so you can explain that you are all long past childhood and feel a cheery Christmas greeting would suffice. And the best TIME to give them the news would be well before the Christmas holidays.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

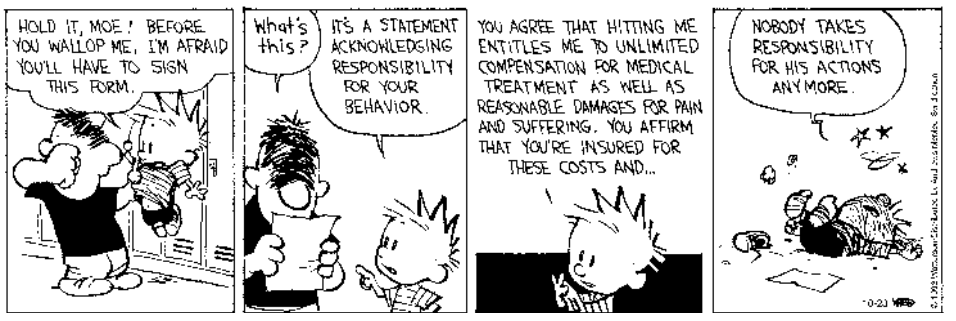
By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

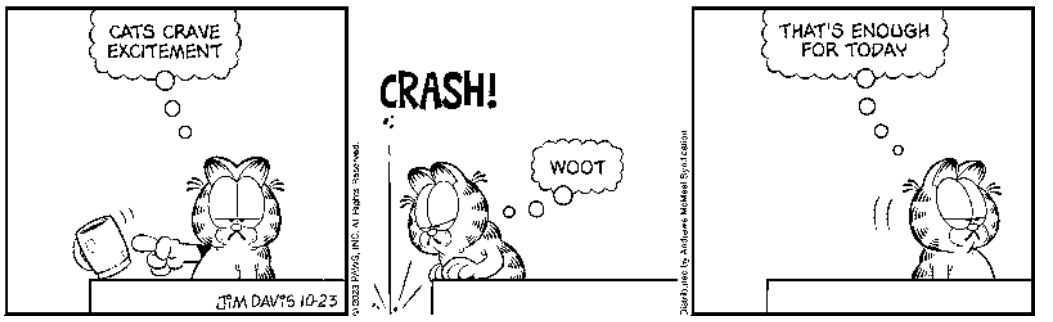
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HOLD IT, MOE! BEFORE YOU WALLOP ME, I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO SIGN THIS FORM.
What's this?
IT'S A STATEMENT ACKNOWLEDGING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR BEHAVIOR.
YOU AGREE THAT HITTING ME ENTITLES ME TO UNLIMITED COMPENSATION FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT AS WELL AS REASONABLE DAMAGES FOR PAIN AND SUFFERING. YOU AFFIRM THAT YOU'RE INSURED FOR THESE COSTS AND...
NOBODY TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS ACTIONS ANYMORE.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

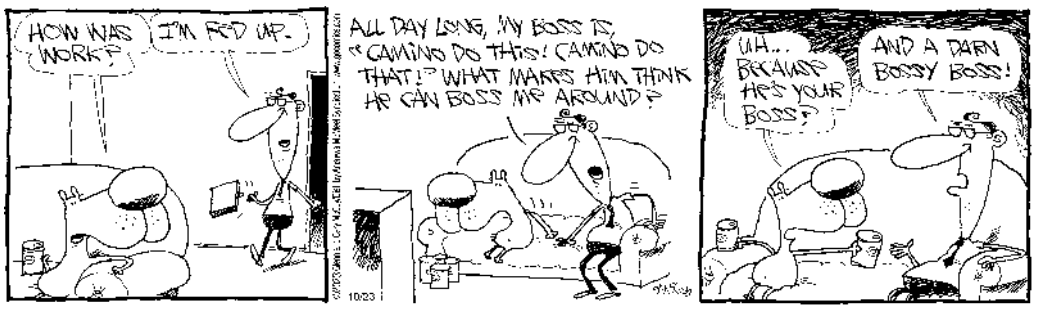


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


HOW WAS WORK?
I'M FED UP.
ALL DAY LONG, MY BOSS IS, "CAMINO DO THIS! CAMINO DO THAT!" WHAT MAKES HIM THINK HE CAN BOSS ME AROUND?
10/23
UH... BECAUSE HE'S YOUR BOSS?
AND A DARN BOSSY BOSS!

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Nile viper
4 "What was I thinking?"
7 Darned
11 Bearded beast
13 Rap sheet letters
14 Thor's father
15 Foot part
16 "Sheesh!"
17 Adorable
18 Bowling lane button
20 Boo-Boo's mentor
22 Corn throw-away
24 Newton and Asimov
28 Morehouse College locale
32 Hilo hello
33 Excellent, in slang
34 Enervate
36 Hose woe
37 Analyze grammatically
39 Bulb holders
41 Tent anchors
43 Yale grad
44 Furniture brand
46 Macaroni shape
50 Genesis brother
53 Actress Long
55 — Linda, Calif.
56 Shopping complex
57 Peculiar
58 Crooned
59 Pen fluids
60 "Awesome!"
61 Serena, to Venus

DOWN

1 Lab gel
2 Achy
3 Lobbying orgs.
4 Weir
5 Fine
6 Asian capital
7 Diplomat's assets
8 Sch. URL ender
9 Humorist
10 Compass dir.
12 Resort area in New York state
19 Great weight
21 Fed. office supplier
23 "Butter" K-pop band
25 Top-of-the-line
26 Converse
27 Droops
28 iPhone downloads
29 Yonder thing
30 Croft of video games
31 Small batteries
35 "The Bells" writer
38 "A spider!"
40 Browns, on scoreboards
42 Toledo title
45 Verdi opera
47 Fluffy scarves
48 Hotel chain
49 Witty ones
50 "— Blue?"
51 Prohibit
52 Caribou kin
54 Toss in

Solution time: 21 mins.

G	C	B	A	G		A	G	E		W	E	E
I	N	U	R	F		R	O	F		F	I	D
T	C	S	C	A		M	A	L	W	A	R	E
		F	O	R	M	A	L		A	V	O	N
S	P	A		S	I	D		P	H	E	Y	S
S	E	R	B		S	A	L	E	M			
I	R	E	A	I	S		A	C	E	I	I	C
			L	A	Y	E	R		Π	S	T	U
A	M	A	Z	E		H	K	O		Q	E	D
Π	O	S	A		I	N	S	I	T	U		
D	A	Y	C	A	R	E		N	E	A	R	S
O	N	F		D	A	S		K	A	R	F	N
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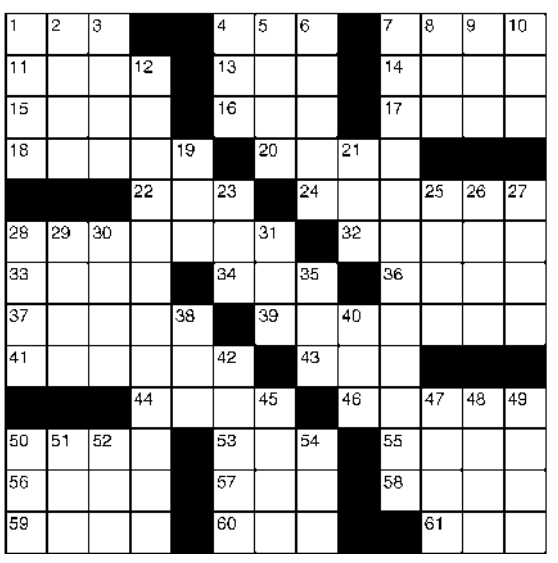
Last Friday's Answer



STUMPED? For answers lo today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ryan Reynolds, 47; Cat Deeley, 47; Weird Al Yankovic, 64; Dwight Yoakam, 67.

Happy Birthday: Strategy is essential if you want to reach your goal. Put emotions aside and refuse to put up with drama or overreact to domestic or relationship mayhem. A steady pace, discipline and a good imagination will carry you to the finish line. Put your energy to good use and your connections, awareness and passion toward finishing what you start. Pay attention to loved ones. Your numbers are 7, 13, 21, 25, 32, 38, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Reach out and connect with people with something to offer. Don't make unnecessary changes to show off. Take care of responsibilities and live up to your promises, and you'll get the desired recognition. Accentuate what you know and do best. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Accept the inevitable and make it work in your favor. Keep your life simple, stick to what works best for you and optimize your talents to ensure you get the most out of everything you pursue. Personal gain and romance are favored. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Target your energy toward success, and you won't be sorry. The results you get will stabilize your position and boost your reputation. Don't expect everyone to be happy for you. A jealous onlooker will try to muscle their way into your spotlight. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Dump the routine and delve into something challenging. Explore your options, learn something new, and contribute your time, items or skills to a cause you care about; an unexpected opportunity will blossom. A change at home will make you happy. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Keep a low profile, observe and take notes. A sensitive situation will spin out of control if you are too vocal or pushy. Don't mix business with pleasure or complain about your work problems at home. Make self-improvement your target. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Take advantage of learning opportunities. Adopt a routine that is new and exciting. Take responsibility for your happiness instead of letting life unfold without guidance or personal input. Get involved in your interests and join forces with someone who shares your likes and dislikes. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Look for a unique way to handle pushy people and unscrupulous situations. A proactive approach will stifle anyone trying to take advantage of you. An outlet for tension and anxiety will help you overcome adversity. Self-improvement is favored. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Speaking up and saying what's on your mind will help you move forward. Honesty and integrity may not be straightforward, but they will help you clarify your position and choices. Prepare to accept and make the changes necessary. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Get your facts straight, share your thoughts and concerns, and make a difference. An articulate assertion of what you propose to do will help you build confidence and support to proceed. Add fitness and a superior health regimen to your routine. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Stick to your plan and don't stop until you reach your goal. Your enthusiasm will ignite onlookers, influencing them to contribute. A joint venture looks lucrative and will help save money. An aesthetic change at home will make life easier and more enjoyable. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Be wary of anyone trying to push you in a questionable direction. Stick to a budget, regardless of temptation or bullying. A firm position will make it difficult for anyone to infiltrate or control what happens next. Be good to yourself. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Make your money work for you. Use your skills strategically and make alterations as you move forward. A change of heart will disrupt your plans if you can't separate common sense from emotional manipulation. A financial or partnership opportunity is favored. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are demonstrative, perceptive and persistent. You are decisive and influential.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			8	1				
		1	5	6		3	9	
	7		2	3			4	8
6	5			2	3	8		4
	2			8			5	6
	8	7			5			3
					6	4		5
7				5			3	9
3	9		4			6	8	

Difficulty: ★ 10/23

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

2	1	3	6	7	5	9	8	4
8	4	7	1	2	9	6	5	3
9	6	5	4	3	8	7	1	2
7	3	2	9	5	1	4	6	8
6	5	4	7	8	2	3	9	1
1	9	8	3	6	4	5	2	7
3	2	9	5	1	7	8	4	6
5	8	6	2	4	3	1	7	9
4	7	1	8	9	6	2	3	5

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Difficulty: ★★★★ 10/21

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

TOPKAPI PALACE, ISTANBUL Solution: 8 letters

H	A	R	E	M	N	O	I	T	A	T	U	L	A	S
Y	E	K	R	U	T	E	M	L	E	H	D	R	R	U
E	R	R	I	E	N	O	R	H	T	L	M	E	O	L
R	U	U	I	P	R	I	V	Y	O	O	W	M	Y	T
I	T	C	S	T	Ⓔ	Ⓣ	Ⓐ	Ⓖ	R	O	G	U	A	A
P	C	I	D	A	A	M	P	T	L	E	N	E	L	N
M	E	R	R	L	E	G	P	F	N	G	I	S	E	D
E	T	O	T	I	A	R	E	R	D	U	K	U	T	R
N	I	T	N	O	Y	R	T	T	O	O	O	M	I	A
A	H	S	W	L	U	R	E	A	R	P	M	F	C	Y
M	C	I	O	S	T	R	A	M	L	O	H	E	K	T
O	R	H	R	A	L	O	G	R	E	P	S	E	E	R
T	A	N	C	E	S	T	O	R	B	M	I	N	T	U
T	C	I	R	T	S	I	D	H	T	I	A	F	O	O
O	I	L	G	A	R	E	S	G	N	I	L	I	E	C

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Ancestor, Architecture, Armor, Arts, Ceiling, Consort, Courtyard, Crown, Design, Dome, Emerald, Faith District, Flowers, Fountain, Gate, Gold, Harem, Helmet, Heritage, Historic, Holy, King, Library, Mint, Museum, Ottoman Empire, Pergola, Privy, Prophet, Royal, Salutation, Seraglio, Sultan, Throne, Ticket, Tour, Treasury, Turkey

Last Friday's Answer: Argentina

To purchase **WONDERWORD** books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Wheeler deals, 3 homer as Phillies beat D-backs for 3-2 lead in NLCS

PHOENIX (AP)—Kyle Schwarber got a hanging breaking ball at the top of the strike zone in the sixth inning and did what he does so well in the postseason, obliterate a baseball deep into the seats for another home run.

The formidable Philadelphia Phillies looked mortal for a couple days during a pair of frustrating one-run losses. Their response on Saturday night proved that they're far from finished.

Zack Wheeler delivered another postseason gem with seven shutdown innings, Schwarber, Bryce Harper and J.T. Realmulto all homered and the Phillies beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 6-1 to take a 3-2 NL Championship Series lead.

"Everything was fantastic," Schwarber said. "It was a great response. Obviously, didn't work out the way we wanted last night, but it was great that we were able to turn the page and really put our focus and effort into this one."

Philadelphia moved one win from its second straight World Series appearance, regaining control after wasting late leads in consecutive losses at Chase Field.

Bryson Stott hit an RBI single and Harper slid home in a collision with catcher Gabriel Moreno as part of a double steal that built a 2-0 lead in the first off Zac Gallen. It was part of a big game for the 30-year-old Harper, who had two hits, three runs, a diving defensive play and his long homer.

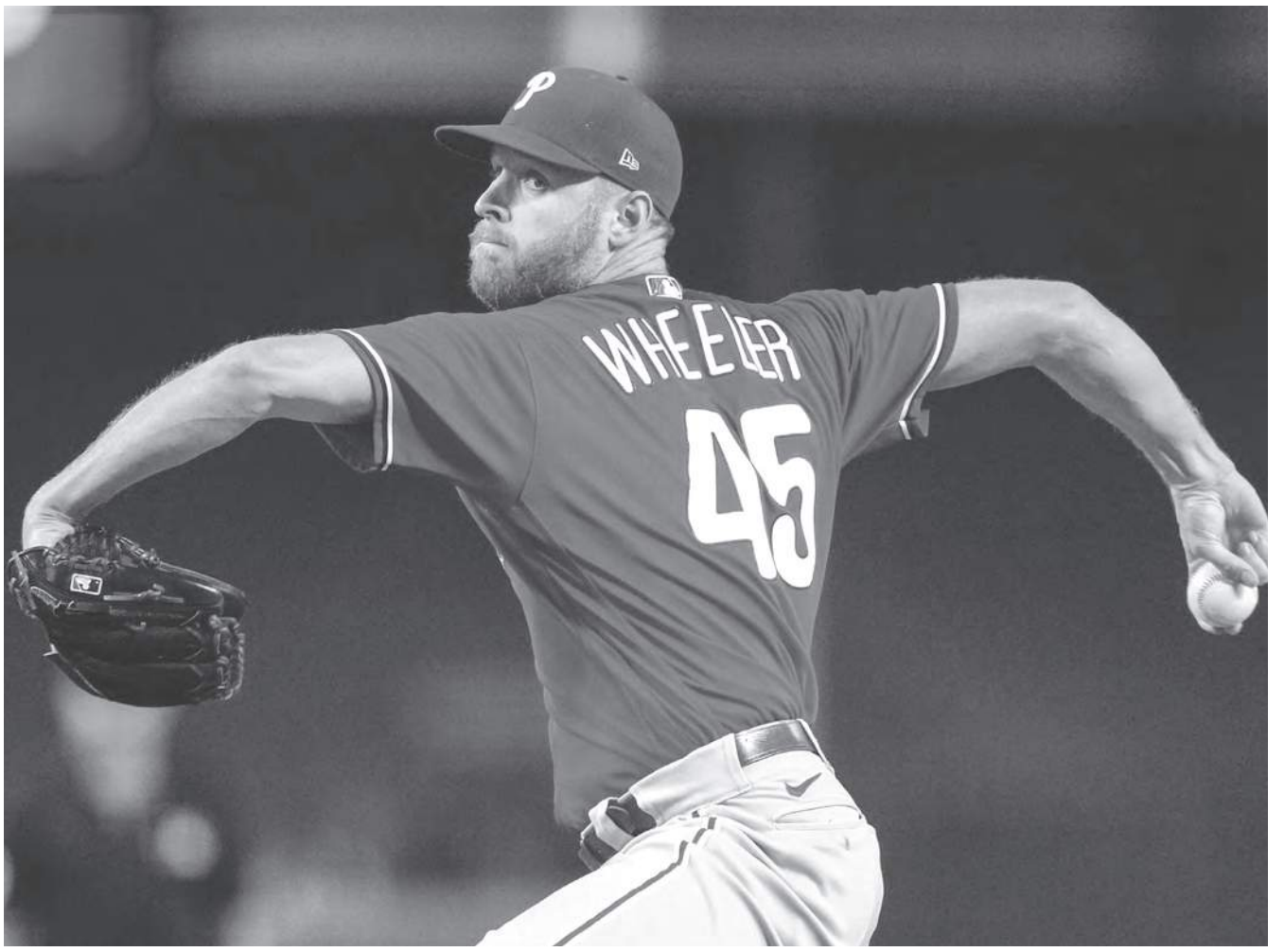
"He's as good as they get," Phillies manager Rob Thomson said. "He might be the best I've been around, just watching him on a daily basis."

Harper, who returned in May from Tommy John surgery, is batting .343 with five homers, eight RBIs and 12 walks in 11 postseason games.

"I just want to win. That's it. Whatever that takes, whatever that's going to be, whatever that's going to look like," he said. "That was a big game for us. Coming in here and getting one is huge. That's a good team over there. We took advantage of everything we could."

Schwarber's homer was his fifth in the NLCS and 20th of his postseason career as the Philadelphia lineup roughed up Gallen for a second time this series. Schwarber's sixth-inning drive traveled 461 feet over the swimming pool beyond the right-center fence, quieting a crowd of 47,897. Two batters later, Harper hit a 444-foot homer into the right-field seats.

Realmuto added a two-run homer in the eighth against Luis Frías for 6-1 lead.



AP

Philadelphia Phillies starting pitcher Zack Wheeler throws against the Arizona Diamondbacks during the fourth inning in Game 5 of the baseball NL Championship Series in Phoenix, Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023.

The series resumes Monday in Philadelphia, where the Phillies are 6-0 this postseason with 17 homers.

Wheeler, a 33-year-old right-hander, gave up one run and five hits with a walk while striking out eight. He is 3-0 with a 2.08 ERA in four postseason starts this year, striking out 34 and walking two in 26 innings.

"He gave us exactly what we needed," Thomson said.

Philadelphia's starting pitchers have a 1.48 ERA in this postseason with 67 strikeouts and just seven walks in 61 innings.

Gallen gave up four runs and six hits six innings, dropping to 2-2 with a 5.24 in four playoff outings. He allowed five runs over five innings in taking the Game 1 loss to Wheeler.

Alek Thomas homered in the seventh for the Diamondbacks, a day after his tying home run in the eighth sparked Arizona to a series-evening win. Thomas has a team record four homers this postseason.

Schwarber, batting .412 with five solo homers in the series, reached on an infield single starting the game and scored on Stott's two-out single. Stott's dash for second on a steal drew a throw from Moreno to second baseman Ketel Marte, who stepped in front of the base and made an errant return throw that bounced past Moreno.

Harper collided with Moreno at home plate, dazing the catcher, but who remained in the game. Umpires ruled Harper couldn't have avoided the collision because Marte's throw drew Moreno down the third-base line.

"We made some mistakes today," D-backs manager Torey Lovullo said. "We didn't capitalize in some key situations and that was the difference in the game."

Schwarber reached 20 postseason homers in 63 games, a record low. The prior mark was held by Houston's Jose Altuve at 68 games.

Harper's steal of home was the first in Phillies' postseason history and just the 22nd in MLB postseason history. It was the ninth steal of home in since playoffs started in 1969 and the first since Tampa Bay's Randy Arozarena in 2021.

Pavin Smith went 0 for 4 with two strikeouts in his first start of the postseason, batting him fifth as the designated hitter. Tommy Pham was benched after hitting 1 of 13 in the first four games of the NLCS. Smith entered 3 of 4 this postseason.

Temperatures hovered around 100 in Phoenix, so Chase Field's retractable roof was closed for the third straight game.

ASTROS 5, RANGERS 4

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP—Jose Altuve thrives under pressure for the Houston Astros, able to stay calm in the biggest October moments even after another bench-clearing fracas against the Texas Rangers.

The defending World Series champions are one win from a third consecutive pennant after Altuve's three-run homer in the ninth inning of a wild and testy 5-4 victory over their instate division rival Friday gave the Astros a 3-2 lead in the AL Championship Series.

"He's got a high concentration level, because that's what it takes in big moments like that, is concentration, desire, and relaxation all encompassed into one. And everybody can't do all three of those things," Houston manager Dusty Baker said. "This dude is one of the baddest dudes I've ever seen, and I've seen some greats."

Baker wasn't in the dugout when Altuve hit his 26th career postseason homer, second in major league history behind Manny Ramirez (29). The skipper was ejected an inning earlier after the benches and bullpens cleared.

Rangers slugger Adolis García, who punctuated a go-ahead homer in the sixth with an empathic bat spike and a slow trot, became irate when Bryan Abreu hit him on the left arm with a 98 mph fastball. García immediately turned around and got in the face of catcher Martín Maldonado — the two also jawed nose-to-nose when García touched home plate after his grand slam in Houston on July 26.

"I just reacted to the ball that came towards me," García said. "He could have hurt me, he could have injured me. I just let him know that shouldn't happen there."

While it didn't appear any punches were thrown as the teams grabbed hold of each other near home plate, the game was delayed almost 12 minutes. García, Abreu and Baker were all ejected.

After the game, umpire crew chief James Hoye told a pool reporter Abreu was ejected for throwing with intent, and García was tossed for being the aggressor.

"The guy hits a three-run homer; the next time up he gets smoked," Texas manager Bruce Bochy said. "I'd be upset, too, if I was Doli. But like I said, it just took too long to get things back in order, that's what was frustrating me."

Rangers closer José Leclerc gave up a single to pinch-hitter Yainer Diaz to open the Houston ninth and walked pinch-hitter Jon Singleton at the bottom of the lineup. The 5-foot-6 Altuve, playing in his 101st postseason game for Houston, then pulled an 0-1 changeup over the left-field fence, just beyond the glove of a leaping Evan Carter.

"Emotions are high in the postseason. You've got two of the best teams in the world competing against each other. Everybody's trying to win. I feel like that's just him," said Alex Bregman, who also homered for the Astros. "He has a slow heartbeat. He's calm under pressure. He's confident in his ability. He always is just focused."

The visiting team has won every game in the first postseason matchup between the Lone Star State rivals after the Astros won three in a row in Arlington. Game 6 in the best-of-seven series is Sunday night in Houston.

"We've done it so many times. We never give up until the last out," Altuve said.

García connected off three-time Cy Young Award winner Justin Verlander, who took a 2-1 lead into the bottom of the sixth before Corey Seager doubled, Carter singled and García homered in a span of three pitches to make it 4-2.

Nathaniel Lowe also went deep for the wild-card Rangers, tying it 1-all in the fifth.

Ryan Pressly pitched two scoreless innings for the win after replacing Abreu following his ejection. Pressly gave up consecutive singles to start the bottom of the ninth before retiring the top three batters in Texas' lineup. Marcus Semien lined out to shortstop, Seager flied out to deep center and Carter struck out to end it.

Houston is in its seventh straight ALCS and is trying to get to its fifth World Series during that span.

The AL West champion Astros are 40-45 this year at Minute Maid Park, including 1-3 in the postseason. But they are 5-0 on the road and have won 19 of their past 22 games away from home overall.

Houston went 9-1 at Globe Life Field this season, winning its last eight while outscoring Texas 79-36.

García, the Cuban slugger known as El Bombi, took a couple of slow steps out of the batter's box after connecting off Verlander and was about halfway down the baseline when the ball landed in the first row of seats a few feet beyond the left-center wall. It was his fourth homer this postseason.

That go-ahead shot in the 42nd inning of this series was the first time the home team took the lead at any point through the first five games.

Houston took a 2-1 lead in the sixth when José Abreu reached out to hit a 79 mph curveball from starter Jordan Montgomery and the sharply hit ball took a tough hop off Seager at shortstop for an RBI single.

Josh Sborz entered with the bases loaded and one out but prevented further damage with the help of a diving play by Semien at second base.

Verlander retired 13 of his first 15 batters in his 21st postseason start for Houston until Lowe went the opposite way for a 380-foot homer to left field. The 40-year-old right-hander allowed four runs and six hits over 5 2/3 innings.

A day after the retractable roof at Globe Life Park was open during a game for the first time since May 21, it was closed again on a sunny afternoon. The temperature outside at first pitch was 91 degrees. It was 74 inside.

Lawrence comes through late; Jaguars hold off Saints, 31-24

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Jacksonville quarterback Trevor Lawrence was playing with a sprained left knee, and the visiting Jaguars hurt their own cause with turnovers and penalties.

They were still good enough to overcome that and pull out a dramatic victory that extended their winning streak to four games.

Travis Etienne ran for two touchdowns, Foyesade Oluokun returned an interception for a score, and Christian Kirk's late 44-yard touchdown after a short catch over the middle lifted the Jaguars to a 31-24 victory over the New Orleans Saints on Thursday night.

"I don't think I've run that fast since college," said Kirk, a former Texas A&M star, whose late score made up for his lost fumble in the first half. "That was some vintage stuff. I'm glad I was able to do it in that moment."

Lawrence returned from the knee injury that forced him out of the final minutes of a victory over Indianapolis on Sunday and wound up leading Jacksonville (5-2) with 59 yards rushing.

AP

Jacksonville Jaguars quarterback Trevor Lawrence (16) runs for yardage against the New Orleans Saints in the first half of an NFL football game in New Orleans, Thursday, Oct. 19, 2023.

"It's crazy how you have something like that going on and don't plan on moving a lot, and you end up running the ball more than you usually do," Lawrence said. "It felt pretty good. It didn't bother me too much and definitely didn't set it back. That was the goal, to play, find a way to win the game and not set it back."

Lawrence also completed 20 of 29 passes for 204 yards and one TD to help the Jags secure their best start since opening 5-2 in 2007.

After Kirk's touchdown broke a 24-all tie with 3:08 left, the Saints (3-4) were in position to answer when they drove inside the Jacksonville 10 in the final minute, but stalled out with four straight incomplete passes.

Derek Carr's third-down pass bounced off of tight end Foster Moreau's hands in the back of the end zone and a fourth-down timing throw to Chris Olave along the left sideline fell incomplete.

"We're finding it hard to start fast, finding it hard to maintain, to execute sometimes and we're finding it hard to finish," said Saints running back Alvin Kamara, who gained 153 yards from scrimmage on a mix of runs and catches. "That's kind of the glaring and recurring theme."

As time ran out, Moreau, a New Orleans native in his first season back home, looked disconsolate on the bench with his head in his hands. Teammates consoled him and later said there were too many other missed opportunities throughout the game to pin the loss on his drop.

"It doesn't come down to one play," Carr said. "There's so many things that we could have done."

Jacksonville gave the Saints numerous chances to stay in the game, losing two fumbles in the first half and committing untimely penalties throughout the game.

It almost came back to haunt them.

The Saints rallied from 24-9 down to tie the game on touchdowns by Taysom Hill on a 1-yard, fourth-down run and Michael Thomas on a 17-yard reception — the latter followed by Carr's pass to Kamara for a 2-point conversion.

Carr finished 33 of 55 for 301 yards, and New Orleans outgained Jacksonville 407 yards to 330, but the Saints again struggled to finish promising drives in the end zone after losing in a similar fashion in Week 6 at Houston.

After practicing on a limited basis this week and being listed as questionable, Lawrence completed five of his first six passes for 60 yards and even scrambled for 9 yards during a game-opening touchdown drive that ended with Etienne's 2-yard run.

"We have to do a better job of not letting the freakin' quarterback scramble," Saints coach Dennis Allen said, calling Lawrence's improvised runs a "black eye on the whole thing."

New Orleans' first drive ended wit Blake Grupe's missed 51-yard field goal. But the Saints got the ball right back when Kirk was stripped by cornerback Paulson Adebo after a 19-yard catch and defensive end Carl Granderson recovered.

When New Orleans punted soon after, Jacksonville turned it over again when Tevaughn Campbell, who was trying to block, collided hard with returner Jamal Agnew as Lou Hedley's punt descended and hit Campbell's back.

Lonnie Johnson recovered for New Orleans, which stalled on the Jaguars 5 and settled for Grupe's field goal.

Etienne became the first player in Jaguars history to rush for two touchdowns in three consecutive games when he ran around the left end for a 17-yard score that made it 14-3.

After their seventh third-down failure of the first half, the Saints settled for another Grupe field goal.

In the final minutes of the half, Jacksonville converted a fake punt with punter Logan Cooke completing a 13-yard pass to Tim Jones on fourth and 2, setting up Brandon McManus' 43-yard field goal for a 17-6 halftime lead.

Cowboys kicker Aubrey has shot at NFL history in 2nd pro career after soccer

FRISCO, Texas (AP)—Dallas Cowboys kicker Brandon Aubrey was watching on TV nine months ago when Brett Maher, his predecessor, missed four consecutive extra points in a playoff game.

The former Major League Soccer prospect who never kicked in high school or college was four years into working toward what he hoped would be a new profession, unaware that his biggest opportunity was just months away—with his hometown team, no less.

Then the 28-year-old rookie shanked his first kick in the NFL—a PAT, of course. Aubrey hasn't missed since.

"Maybe when I feel like he's got a pretty good chance is when he missed the first PAT and he came back and made the next one and the next one and the next field goal and the next field goal," special teams coordinator John Fassel said. "What a great sign to miss your very first attempt and not freak out."

Aubrey is 16 of 16 on field goals, two shy of the NFL record for consecutive makes to start a career set by Travis Coons with Cleveland eight years ago.

The record will be in range when the Cowboys (4-2) play the Los Angeles Rams at home Oct. 29, after their bye week. Fassel is already skittish about those questions.

"I'm trying to kind of just lay low with it," the coach said.

That's what Fassel was doing in June when he went to see Aubrey kick for the Birmingham Stallions during Aubrey's second season in the USFL. A former NFL punter saw Fassel, so the secret was out.

Or maybe there wasn't much of a secret in the first place, since Fassel felt the need to get on the field for a closer look at an intriguing prospect.

"I tried to stay out of the way," Fassel said, "but even a tall, skinny, ugly guy stands out."

The Cowboys stuck with Maher through the 31-14 wild-card win over Tampa Bay last January, and the 19-12 loss to San Francisco in the divisional round, when Maher had another PAT blocked.

Owner and general manager Jerry Jones said after the season the club intended to move on at kicker, which led to Fassel's "stealth operation" in Alabama, and now to Aubrey's somewhat unique status.

"It would be my third time, technically, being a rookie," Aubrey said. "Being a rookie with MLS, rookie with the USFL, rookie here. I know what it feels like to be a rookie."

Aubrey went to high school in the Dallas suburb of Plano and played on the Dallas Texans, the club soccer program that produced retired U.S. national team star Clint Dempsey.

After a career at Notre Dame that included a national championship as a freshman, Aubrey was a first-round draft pick by Toronto FC in 2017 with a listed salary of $75,000.

Less than two years later, having already been released by that club and the Philadelphia Union, he faced the prospect of making half that in yet another year in the second tier of MLS.

Instead, he took a job as a software engineer not far from AT&T Stadium, the home of the Dallas Cowboys.

Not long after choosing family and earning power over trying to push the soccer career further, Aubrey and his wife were watching a football game when she essentially said, of kicking, "Hey, you can do that."

After a couple of years of working with kicking coaches and attending scouting combines, Aubrey was the last of six kickers picked in the 2022 USFL draft.

Not long after Fassel's trip to Birmingham, Aubrey signed a $2.7 million, three-year contract, with no guaranteed money and a $750,000 salary for this season.

He opened training camp competing with Tristan Vizcaino, who was brought in as a midweek addition last season after Maher's four consecutive PAT misses but didn't kick against the Niners.

The Cowboys released Vizcaino before the end of camp, clearing the way for Aubrey, who said the MLS experience taught him not to be afraid to fail.

"I would say the only time I had a different approach was in MLS. That didn't really work out too well for me," Aubrey said. "I was a little bit scared and nervous there. Didn't really feel like I belonged."

There's little question of belonging now.

Aubrey's first moment hinting at drama with Dallas came Monday night against the Los Angeles Chargers, when he made a 39-yarder for a 20-17 lead with 2:19 remaining.

The defense turned it into a game-winner with Stephon Gilmore's interception, and quarterback Dak Prescott revealed Aubrey's nickname when asked about the kicker after the game.

"Butter," as in smooth, said Prescott, who has known of Aubrey for years because the kicker trains with one of Prescott's best friends.

"He's an athlete playing kicker," Prescott said. "He's been a professional. He's mature as hell. Just butter with it, smooth. No surprise."

And it's no surprise Aubrey understands the fickle nature of kicking even without experiencing it himself yet in the NFL. After all, he watched Maher melt down after a great 2022 season with Dallas.

"Any time you see a guy struggle on TV, you feel for him," Aubrey said. "Especially being in that position, feeling that could have been you."

The harsh reality is, it still could be.

After making his first 18 field goals for the Browns in 2015, Coons didn't have a job in Cleveland a year later, and was out of football not long after that.

76ers prepared to start regular season without disgruntled James Harden

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — James Harden vowed he would never play for a franchise run by 76ers team president Daryl Morey.

The Sixers learned Harden really may stick to his word, after the disgruntled guard skipped Philadelphia's entire preseason slate in the wake of his trade demand. Harden—officially away because of a personal matter—did not practice with the Sixers this week and the three-time NBA scoring champion was not at the Wells Fargo Center on Friday night for the finale against Atlanta.

Harden's No. 1 jersey still hung at the arena—only on sale at team stores for $139.

The Sixers are set to open their season Thursday against Milwaukee. They play at Toronto before the Oct. 29 home opener against Portland. Coach Nick Nurse, in his first season after five years with Toronto, is preparing for games without Harden.

"I think I've been preparing for it all this week, for sure," Nurse said Friday. "Lots of thought has gone into him not playing and preparing the team that way this summer. I keep saying, there is another plan if something changes. I don't think it's affected us very much, at all. We've just gone out and played and we're going to have to go out play the way we're trying to play. I think that is without (him) until something changes."

AP

A Philadelphia 76ers fan wears a James Harden jersey prior to a preseason NBA basketball game against the Atlanta Hawks, Friday, Oct. 20, 2023, in Philadelphia.

LADY

From page 20

oust the six-time reigning volleyball champions.

Their well thought out communication and accurate returns and kills rooted the flying Lady Eagles to the ground as they could not catch up to their mounting third set lead. MHS also smartly avoided putting anything into the vicinity of mainstay Fatialofa—which allowed them to steal the first finals matchup.

GCA also made a few too many mistakes as they fumbled around trying to anticipate MHS' next move. After their first finals loss, the Lady Eagles quickly regrouped and devised a new plan to shut down the Lady Dolphins once and for all—while the Lady Dolphins looked to lock in their first championship.

It was all over for the mighty Lady Dolphins though in the final championship round as the Lady Eagles' rotation of Pagaduan, Fatialofa, Omampo, Ota, Gomez, Fabre, Eunji Hahn, Taehee Kim, Ana Teng, Matty Angeles, Maria Zheng, Dianna Zheng, and Jenny Zheng overpowered their exhausted team to clinch their seventh straight title.

After the final point from Pagaduan—what was left of the crowd after the close to three-hour championship matchup exploded into cheers as the Lady Eagles celebrated with tears of joy—while emotions understandably welled up for the Lady Dolphins too, as they came close to breaking GCA's championship streak.

The Lady Dolphins roster with Hix, Zandueta, Relucio, Manglona, Regan, and Capayas, also included Deivalyn Ham, Direnalyn Castro, Myah Omelau, Airianna Estrada, Sheira Dela Rosa, and Ayanna Stole.

MHS first ousted Tinian High School in the morning, 21-12, 21-12, then defeated Saipan International School, in three tough sets, 21-17, 18-21, 16-14.

GCA, on the other hand, defeated Dr. Rita H. Inos High School, 21-7, 21-8; then got the better of MHS, 21-17, 21-16; and beat SIS, 21-15, 21-12.

Esteves, head coach this year of GCA's girls volleyball team, said she was a waterfall of emotion after clinching the championship because it was her last season with the team. She said it's her first championship as head coach and her last.

The three-year volleyball coach said she had told her team a day before the championship that it would be her last season with them as she is leaving the island at the end of the year—and the whole team was a mix of emotions after the finals—happy that they won, but sad that their coach was leaving.

She said, fighting tears back, "I told them, if we're going to win this championship, it's going to be so memorable for me because it's my last season and I'm leaving soon. They didn't break my heart and they gave me the championship—that's why I'm full of emotions. I'm going to miss these students, that's why I'm like this."

As for the championship round, Esteves said, "the first game this morning, we had a lot of errors on receiving and service. I already told them we know what we're capable of—we know how good we are, so we just need to trust ourselves and our teammates… just give your all—be there—talk and have good communication."

The Lady Eagles came into the season undefeated from previous seasons and for the first time, lost a regular season game. Esteves said it was due to a new batch of players coming into the team from middle school—with their core six players having graduated last school year.

"It was going to be hard for them and maybe the chemistry was not there yet, but we still tried to manage with everything that we got. Our first loss before the double elimination was against Agape [Christian School]. We did not underestimate their team—they have a good coach and training, so we just needed to fight back. We lost that one, but we made sure to come back with a good record."

She then thanked the Public School System for the tournament and giving students the opportunity to show off their skills, GCA, coach Cesar Libut, coach Julie Harison, the students, and her family.

Pagaduan, a junior, said "It was such an awe moment for me. That was something I was not expecting, but I knew in my mind—I knew in the team's mind and coaches' mind that it was our game and we were able to get that championship. And so, sticking to that players mindset really helped me get that serve over—get the team together, and I think it's just all about communication and we were able to make it."

Libut, who has been the head coach for all of the school's championship wins, but this time was the assistant coach, said that this game, "was one of the best finals games we've ever played." Officially, it's GCA's seventh straight win in the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Girls High School Volleyball League, but Libut said it's his eighth championship including the private school volleyball league in school year 2015-2016.

As for how he felt about Esteves leaving, he said "She's one of the best players on the island. I've learned a lot from her... And I think this is the key—when we practice, the joy of being together is the key—everybody just wants to stay—we're just like one big family."

Libut added that they will be back even better and stronger than ever next season—in hopes of winning the title for the eighth time.

LEIGH GASES

Grace Christian Academy Lady Eagles captain and setter, junior Eunice Pagaduan, bumps a return as her team and coaches look on during the first finals match against Marianas High School Lady Dolphins in the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Girls High School Volleyball League 2023-2024 double elimination championships last Saturday at the MHS Gymnasium.

FINAL

From page 20

Sariol in the 21st minute. The Kingfishers' Darshwana Chhetri scored the fifth goal in the 28th minute as the Eagles went on to be scoreless for the rest of the game.

GES Mallards grabbed the second semifinals spot after trouncing once undefeated Kagman Elementary School Blue Marlins, 4-1. The Mallards sank the Blue Marlins' contention hopes after their defense shut them down throughout the game.

The Blue Marlins' only goal was made in the ninth minute by Astrid Masiwemai to even up the game, 1-1 after GES' Andrey Rey's goal in the sixth. However, the Mallards went on to score three more unanswered goals—two by Jacob Borja and one by Athitaya Saukan—for the win.

The SVES 2 Canaries heavily defeated Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School Binadus, 6-1. The Canaries' Zayne Reyes and Amaru Younis made it 2-0 by the eighth minute. After a case of mistaken identity, GTC scored in their own goal to give SVES a 3-0 lead.

Back-to-back goals by Derek Teregeyo and Reyes made the game 5-0 by the 30th minute. The only goal for GTC was made by Caysa Marchadesch two minutes later, but it was too little too late as the Canaries took the win with one more goal by Reyes to complete the hat-trick in the 35th minute.

In the final game, KobES Umangs upset erstwhile undefeated Saipan International School Geckos, 3-1, for the last semifinals spot via penalties.

The Geckos drew first blood in the 11th minute from a goal by XingChen Wang, but that was all they wrote as the Umangs tied up the game by way of Alexander Aveira just two minutes later.

Both teams couldn't find a way past the other's goalie and resulted in penalty kicks later for the Umangs who scored two for the win.

The semis are set for today at 4pm and 5pm, with the finals scheduled for Wednesday at 5:30pm.

TRENCH

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lost by points not submission. She tried to submit me with a rear neck choke, arm bar, and kimora (three main moves I can remember) but I managed to get out of those situations so I'm pretty proud of myself even if I came out second."

On his strategy, Mitchell said, "Honestly, I didn't really have a strategy this time. I just had to go with the flow, listen to my coach on the sideline and apply what I learned. I feel I did so much better than my previous Patgon comp.

The third silver medal came by way of first-time competitor Mateo "El Guapo" Almada in the Kids (115 lbs) division.

Almada fought Michael Paul for the gold medal—a giant compared to him, and fell short after three grueling minutes and lost by key lock submission. In his first match, Almada defeated Noel-Kai Fejeran who won bronze.

Almada said he felt nervous competing in Guam for the first time. In the first competition on Saipan, he said he had a feeling he would do well because he knew his opponents and trained with everyone all the time. But this time on Guam, he said it was scary because he didn't know anything about his opponents' skills and that his opponents "would be like pros in kids' bodies."

He said his strategy was "to listen through all the voices in the crowd to hear coach Justis "Cuki" Alvarez and coach Ken Tanzawa for their advice."

The fourth competitor, Sophia Choi, fought valiantly but settled for a loss in the Peewee 2 division.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gabriel Mitchell won a silver medal in the Teen Gi No Max weight division and in the Teen No Gi No Max weight division of the Patgon (Kids) Jiu-Jitsu Tournament Fall 2023 held at the University of Guam Fieldhouse last Saturday.

In the Peewee 2 division Choi started off a little slow and her opponent scored eight points early with two takedowns and a sweep. Her match was only two minutes long and she charged back—but with only 20 seconds left, she was able to secure position and got the pass for three points. She was about to go for the full mount to get four more points, but time ran out. "Guarantee if one minute left, she would've caught up! But it was a good fight," said Alvarez.

Choi said of her first Guam competition that she was scared and nervous, but also excited to compete in a bigger venue. Her biggest lesson that she learned, Choi said, was to be quicker and to keep training.

Alvarez was asked how the competition went and said, "Of course, we all were a little nervous, but we managed to stay composed and implemented our game plan to the best of our ability! I am super proud of all our kids for just getting on the mats and competing their hearts out!"

"Here in the Patgon Jiu Jitsu Tournament, it's a single elimination so you have to win your first match in order to advance to the quarterfinals and semis. So, the pressure to perform well was high! But despite all the tough competition, we made our mark today and all our kids performed well. We are coming home with three silver and one gold, so I am super proud of their accomplishments today, and look forward to the Spring competition next April."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Trey "King Koa" Manglona, right, won the only gold for the Trench Tech Purebred Saipan team, and is joined on the podium by second place, Elias Cantu, in the Patgon (Kids) Jiu-Jitsu Tournament Fall 2023 held at the University of Guam Fieldhouse last Saturday.

Wheeler deals, 3 homer as Phillies beat D-backs for 3-2 lead in NLCS.

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Sports

76ers prepared to start regular season without disgruntled James Harden.

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Lady Eagles win 7th straight v-ball title

LEIGH GASES

Grace Christian Academy Lady Eagles, right, are seven-time girls high school volleyball champions after defeating Marianas High School Lady Dolphins, left, in a fight to the finish double-elimination championship round in the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Girls High School Volleyball League 2023-2024 last Saturday at the MHS Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The Grace Christian Academy Lady Eagles' volleyball legacy is safe in their hands as they made like phoenixes and rose from the ashes after their first finals round loss—and won the last matchup in their double-elimination finals for a seventh straight girls high school volleyball title last Saturday.

The Lady Eagles soared high in the final round led by multi-sport athlete Azriel Fatialofa and captain and setter Eunice Pagaduan—for a two-set, 23-21, 21-16, win against tough contender Marianas High School Lady Dolphins in the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Girls High School Volleyball League 2023-2024 championships at a rowdy and electric MHS Gymnasium.

Battling not only each other, but also hunger, exhaustion, and pressure, the championship round that began in the late morning and ended way past noon, was the epitome of a fight-until-the-finish matchup.

The Lady Dolphins fought with all their heart, soul, sweat, and tears since the tournament began last Thursday and forced a second final match coming from the losers' bracket last Saturday, but it was lucky No. 7 for the Lady Eagles as they gave the best parting gift coach Iszel Esteves could ask for—the championship.

The Lady Eagles' starting six made up of lethal setter Pagaduan, tall and powerful Azriel Fatialofa, hard-serving Alyssa Omampo and Misako Ota, and speedy Sofia Gomez and Bea Fabre, were stumped after the Lady Dolphins forced a last championship matchup when they defeated the Lady Eagles in three nail-biting sets, 16-21, 21-16, 21-14, in the first finals round.

The Lady Dolphins' momentum was in full force as their starting six of Erica Zandueta, Eagles-turned-Dolphin Cassie Regan, Tamia Hix, Rizza Relucio, Elaina Manglona, and Julie Capayas took with them their burning desire to

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LEIGH GASES

An emotional Grace Christian Academy Lady Eagles squad surround their equally emotional head coach, Iszel Esteves, center, for a last huddle and cheer after winning their double-elimination finals matchup against Marianas High School for their 7th straight title of the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Girls High School Volleyball League last Saturday at the MHS Gymnasium.

Trench Tech kids win gold, 3 silvers in Guam tourney

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

They were indeed small but terrible as despite only a small delegation of Trench Tech Purebred Saipan martial artists competed, they managed to bag a gold medal and three silver medals in the Patgon (Kids) Jiu-Jitsu Tournament Fall 2023 held at the University of Guam Fieldhouse last Saturday.

Over 240 competitors from Guam, Nevada, Hawaii, and the CNMI took to the mat for a chance at podium finishes, and Trey "King Koa" Manglona gave the CNMI its only gold medal after trouncing Elias Cantu via the armbar submission just 20 seconds into the match of the Gi/Teen 1 (114 lb) division.

Manglona, who competed in the Spring 2023 tourney, said this time around, he felt like he prepared himself mentally and physically. On winning gold, he said "It feels good representing my family, friends, Trench Tech Purebred, and the CNMI." He added, "my strategy was to attack first and be aggressive, hopefully getting a submission."

Gabriel Mitchell won a silver medal in the Teen Gi No Max weight division and another silver in the Teen No Gi No Max weight division.

Mitchell, on his third time competing in Guam, said he was "a little more confident competing here in Guam this time around."

It was a rematch from Mitchell's first competition as he battled Tana Adamos again—but it was a tough four-minute battle on the mat when Adamos beat him once again for the gold medal via points.

Mitchell said he tapped out to Adamos last time but this time, "I fought her till the end and

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sophia Choi poses for a photo during the Patgon (Kids) Jiu-Jitsu Tournament Fall 2023 held at the University of Guam Fieldhouse last Saturday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

First-time competitor, Mateo "El Guapo" Almada won silver in the Kids (115 lbs) division of the Patgon (Kids) Jiu-Jitsu Tournament Fall 2023 held at the University of Guam Fieldhouse last Saturday.

Final 4 set for ES soccer playoffs

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The stage is set as William S. Reyes Elementary School, Garapan Elementary School, San Vicente Elementary School, and Koblerville Elementary School are the Final 4 teams of the NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Elementary School Soccer League 2023-2024.

WSR Kingfishers made light work of Grace Christian Academy Eagles, 5-1, for the first semifinals spot last Wednesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center.

Imran Kamal stole the show as he completed a hat-trick for the Kingfishers just 27 minutes into the game. Before him, Xander Binghit drew first blood in the 6th minute for a 4-1 lead over the Eagles.

The lone goal for the Eagles was made by Chloe

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A Kagman Elementary School player, right, goes up against a Garapan Elementary School player during their quarterfinal matchup of the NMIFA-PSS Interscholastic Elementary School Soccer League 2023-2024 at the NMI Soccer Training Center last Wednesday.